

ASIFA

SAN FRANCISCO

The International Film Association
P.O. Box 14516 • San Francisco, CA 94114

SEPTEMBER, 2000



ROBIN ALLAN, A DISNEY SCHOLAR FROM ENGLAND, WILL TALK ABOUT EUROPEAN INFLUENCES ON THE STUDIO'S FIRST FEATURES AND SIGN COPIES OF HIS NEW BOOK AT OUR TUES. SEPT. 12 EVENT Dr. Allan will show a selection of rare images that influenced Disney's artists and talk about his years of research. Several years ago he presented our ASIFA chapter a work-in-progress slide lecture and people were quite impressed with the insights they got from his talk. Since then he has completed his book *Walt Disney and Europe: European Influences on the Animated Feature Films of Walt Disney*, John Libbey & Co., Sydney, 1998. Available in North America from Indiana University Press.

Allan's research is based on interviews with artists who created features and short films at Disney and on records in the studio's archives (story conference notes, etc.). Allan spent over 10 years working on this project. The book covers some of the classic shorts, features from *Snow White* to *Jungle Book*, Disney's choice of music for *Fantasia* and other films, European influences on the design and architecture of Disneyland, etc. This a rare chance to hear Allan discuss this fascinating subject.

The event will be at the Exploratorium, Tues. Sept. 12 at 7:30 pm. Note: For the best seats arrive early. Our July event, Animation as a Great Art Form, was so popular that some people had to sit on the floor and some latecomers were turned away. We are now announcing events on the Internet and it apparently reaches lots of people who otherwise would not hear about our activities.

CHRIS LANIER'S ROMANOV MAKES THE COVER OF ANIMATION WORLD MAGAZINE at www.awn.com. He wrote an intelligent and informative article about the aesthetics of animation on the Internet. The second season of *Romanov* for Wild Brain.com has gone into production.

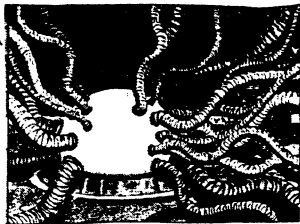
THREE RARE OSKAR FISCHINGER PROGRAMS AT THE PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE IN SEPT. DR. WILLIAM MORITZ FROM CAL ARTS WILL INTRODUCE THE SHOWS Fischinger was a pioneer of animation as a fine art. He worked in Germany until he fled to America in the mid-30s. Hitler's administrators left him alone until he won a major international prize at a festival in Venice. The festival's publicity embarrassed the Fascists as his work was not in a style they approved of. In the US he worked for Paramount, MGM and Disney. He had some financial support from the Guggenheim Foundation, but found life difficult being a German in Los Angeles during the war (he had to be home every day before dark, etc.). Today, he is considered one of the great masters of animation.

Don't miss this rare chance to see mint 35mm prints of his work. His major works will be shown on Sat. Sept. 23 at 7 pm and again on Tues. Sept. 26 at 7:30 pm. A program on artists influenced by Fischinger will be shown on Sat. Sept. 23 at 9 pm. A program of less well known works by Fischinger will be shown on Sunday, Sept. 24 at 5:30 pm. (Also coming to the PFA are films from the Ottawa International Animation Festival, Nov. 4 and 11.)

MARIKO HOSHI, 3RD PRIZE WINNER AT OUR SCREENING OF THE ASIFA-EAST COMPETITION, IS A BAY AREA ANIMATOR Her award winning *Hello Dolly!* was her second film. It was made while finishing her graduate work at the Academy of Art (her first film was shown at our annual open screening for students 2 years ago). Since completing the work in December, it has won awards at SIGGRAPH 2000, Big Kahuna Computer Contest (prize for story telling), ASIFA-East (2nd in the student category), and Crested Butte in Montana (silver award in the student category). At SIGGRAPH it was one of 40 works selected to be shown in their main show, the Electronic Theater. It is available on the DVD of highlights of this year's SIGGRAPH. It was reviewed by Wendy Jackson in the August issue of *Animation World Magazine* (at AWN). Two companies are currently discussing distribution rights with her. Hoshi did her undergraduate work at SF State in Graphics Art and Design. She thanks Jane Veeder, who teaches computer animation at State, for introducing her to ASIFA.

CAST OF PIXAR'S MONSTERS INC. ANNOUNCED It includes Billy Crystal, John Goodman, Steve Buscemi, James Coburn, Jennifer Lily, Bonnie Hunt and Mary Gibbs. It is an adventure of a girl in a land of "spooks and scares." The directors are Pete Docter (*Toy Story*) and David Silverman (*The Simpsons*). Release date is Nov. 2001.

VISIT US AT WWW.ASIFA-SF.ORG



FILM ARTS FOUNDATION HAS AWARDED JEREMY SOLTERBECK A \$7000 COMPLETION GRANT for his animated hand drawn *Moving Illustrations of Machines*. The film is being completed in 35mm.

RADIUM MAKES A CAR FLY AND A DOG TALK

The first 3D effect shots were for an ad for Autobytl.com. The car in the ad is delivering newspapers. The talking dog is for a Kellogg's ad. The facial expressions include raised eyebrows and moving ears.

A third Radium ad was for the 2001 Oldsmobile Aurora. They showed it moving through a house and onto elevated tracks that led it to a country landscape inhabited by giant turtles. Simon Mowbray was the digital artist and Mark Malmberg was the cgi director.

XAOS HAS COMPLETED AN AMUSEMENT PARK

RIDE FILM It was created for the Autostadt Theme Park in Germany.

GENE PORTWOOD JR., 1933 - JULY 17, 2000

Portwood is probably best known as the co-creator (with Lauren Elliot) of *Carmen Sandiego* (Broderbund). He had worked for Disney in the 1950s on *Lady and the Tramp* (1955), *Paul Bunyan* (1958), *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and other films. He also drew lots of Jiminy Cricket openings for *The Mickey Mouse Club*. He opened Elliot Portwood Productions with Lauren Elliot after he left Broderbund. They specialized in CD-ROM productions.

Gene Hamm reports that at the end of his funeral they played a melody that he loved, "Always look on the bright side of life." Portwood is buried near the resting place of Charles Shultz.

SPAZZCO, A NEW ANIMATION STUDIO SPECIALIZING IN WORK FOR THE WEB, HAS A CONTRACT WITH CARTOON NETWORK

They are creating 3 original cartoons for Cartoon Network.com. *Time-E-Lapse* covers the do's and don'ts of time travel. The pilot went on-line Aug. 14. *Journey to the Center of my Dog's Head* explores the complexities of a boy's ailing canine. It will be released in Sept. *The Bickleshotz County Flying Club* recalls the exploits of the world's most outlandish aviators. It premieres in Oct.

SpazzCo is a "fancy-pants animation studio" according to their press release. It claims Dana Muise, their creative director and founder, makes their artists "speak in Scooby" every Friday... (There is a rumor that his canine fixation was brought on by his working too many years as a freelance video game artist.) The current production team includes producer Catherine Dingman and animators Aaron Blecha and Aaron Kohr. SpazzCo is located at 1620 Folsom, SF, 94103. (415) 551-2692, www.spazzco.com

WILD BRAIN HAS COMPLETED 3 SPOTS FOR SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT The ads combine cel animation with live action music video footage. The spots were made to be shown exclusively on MTV. Ed Bell was the creative director and Robert Valley was the director. Valley had a hand in designing the Japanese style animation in the ads. Stewart Lee was the animation director and the animators were Dan McHale, Brad Rau and Aaron Sorenson. The effects animator was Chris Carter.

GEORGE LUCAS MAY PRODUCE A JAPANESE ANIME FEATURE He is scheduled to go to Japan in September to finalize the agreement to produce *The Tiny Fairy*. It will have a \$18.5 million budget.

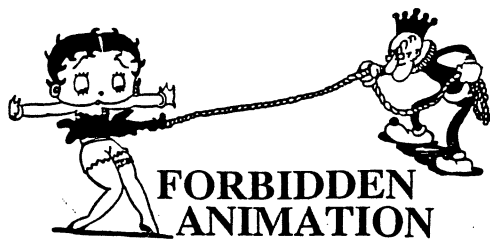
DOTCOMIX (FORMERLY PROTOZOA) IS RUNNING THE ELECTION YEAR CAMPAIGN FOR GARY TRUDEAU'S UNCLE DUKE ON THE WEB AND ON TV The Duke 2000 Campaign hit the road with an hour long guest appearance of Duke on the *Larry King Show*. Duke, a real-time digital star, has also been on other network programs. On the Entertaindom web site Duke just advocated "compassionate fascism." The comic strip star is now a nicely modeled 3D realtime computer generated character. Trudeau has accepted a position on their advisory board.

DotComix is growing rapidly in size, thanks in part to their getting \$8.5 million in financing. They expect to have 90 employees by the end of summer. They have added several seasoned writers and other talented people to their staff. Their founders are Brad de Graf, Eric Gregory and Mark Scaparro.

SPY POST MOVES TO A NEW LOCATION, OUT OF WILD BRAIN'S STUDIO This digital post production facility did the compositing and color correction on Wild Brain's contribution to the recent Rocky and Bullwinkle feature. They also worked on Wild Brain's latest ads for Sony Music. Their press release doesn't say where their new home is (only "south of Market") or what their phone number is, but they do have a web address - www.spypost.com

RAY HARRYHAUSEN SPOKE AT THE RAFAEL FILM CENTER The event in July offered fans and professionals a chance to ask him questions for almost an hour. They also showed a few film clips and a video tribute from many giants of the film industry (Lucas, Phil Tippet, Spielberg, etc.) in honor of Harryhausen's 80th birthday.

Harryhausen stressed that he did most of the animation and model building by himself, that his work was for low budget productions and he did not want his work to look photo realistic. Several times he mentioned that he worked on fantasy productions that featured wholesome stories. He hopes none of his films ever corrupted the minds of young people. He suggested that some of today's films have a negative influence on impressionable minds.



PART OF KARL COHEN'S BOOK *FORBIDDEN ANIMATION* IS BEING TURNED INTO AN HOUR DOCUMENTRY FOR BRITISH TV A crew from Keith Griffith's* *Illuminations* spent several hours taping an interview with Cohen in August. The show is based on material discussed in his book *Forbidden Animation: Censored Cartoons and Blacklisted Animators* (from McFarland & Co.). Cohen's interview will run throughout the show. Other interviews will be used to build on the subjects he introduces. Mike Judge, John Kricfalusi, Jerry Beck and Dr. Bill Moritz were interviewed for the show in LA and Ralph Bakshi and J.J. Sedelmaier were interviewed on the East Coast. The show airs in England on the BBC's Channel 4 on Sun. Sept. 17 at 10:30 PM. It is a special feature of their animation week programming. (*Griffith is the producer of Svankmajer's *Alice*, films with Brothers Quay and lots of documentaries about culture and the arts.)

Cohen has been invited to introduce his film program *Forbidden Animation* in Bilbao, Spain in late Nov. at their international film festival.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS (NAB) TO HOLD ANNUAL CONVENTION HERE - MEDIA ALLIANCE REPORTS WE CAN EXPECT PROTESTS AGAINST NAB "The NAB spends millions of dollars every year lobbying to keep the airwaves out of the hands of the public. They represent the media giants who put out the trash that we call commercial radio and television. They steal our airwaves, misrepresent our issues, and stereotype all of us. They are the media arm of the corporate agenda." The event is Sept. 20-23 at Moscone Center. Go to www.mediademocracynow.org for information about the protests.

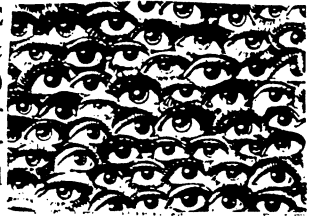
SF STATE'S COLLEGE OF EXTENDED LEARNING OFFERING CONTEMPORARY ANIMATION THIS FALL Imagine getting college credit for watching the latest cartoons and meeting some of the people who create them. Karl Cohen will be taking students enrolled in Cine 465 on a 16 week tour of Bay Area and world animation. Students will explore everything from traditional storytelling to sick and twisted works. Animation made for the Internet, TV censorship, the British industry, the rise and fall of animation in communist countries and the use of the medium in China and Japan are among the topics to be covered. Guests will include several SF State alumni who work in the local animation industry. They will talk about their jobs, marketing, distribution and other topics.

For more information (3 units, meets Wednesdays, 7-10 pm, beginning Aug. 30) call 415 405-7700

CURIOUS PICTURES IN SF DID THE OPENING FOR THE BOB CLAMPETT SHOW ON CARTOON NETWORK The opening features Clampett characters from both his Warner Bros. years and his work for TV. Denis Morella of Curious' local office directed it.

FRANK AND CAROLINE MOURIS (FRANK FILM & FRANKLY CAROLINE)

WRITE US "Many thanks for the pleasant surprise of your newsletter and the wonderful prize!" (a check for winning 2nd place in our screening of winners from the ASIFA-East annual competition).



ASIFA-SF STILL NEEDS SOMEBODY TO KEEP OUR MAILING LABELS UP-TO-DATE AND TO PRINT THEM OUT 11 TIMES A YEAR. IF WE HAVE TO USE A MAILING SERVICE, YOUR DUES WILL PROBABLY GO UP... If you can help, please call Karl Cohen (415) 386-1004.

Our dues haven't gone up in over 15 years because everybody volunteers their labor. At present we are spending slightly more than we take in each year, but we can absorb the loss as we have a small cash reserve.

Our annual expenses are going up (hall rentals, Internet fees, printing costs, etc.) and the number of members is going down slowly, so...

please help - get a friend to join

LOCAL SCREENINGS

Tues. Sept. 12, ASIFA-SF presents Robin Allan on **EUROPEAN INFLUENCES ON THE ART OF THE DISNEY STUDIO**, 7:30 PM, Exploratorium, free.

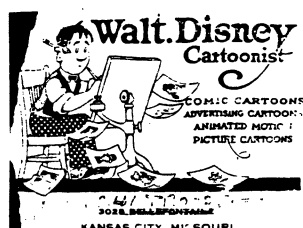
Sat. Sept. 23, **OSKAR FISCHINGER TRIBUTE**, Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley. His best known classics at 7 PM. At 9 works by animators influenced by him. (see p. 1 story)

Sun. Sept. 24, **OSKAR FISCHINGER TRIBUTE**, PFA, 5 PM, a program of rarely seen works by Fischinger.

Tues. Sept. 26, **OSKAR FISCHINGER TRIBUTE**, repeat of the Sun. Sept. 23, 7 PM show.

Wednesday - Saturday, September 27 - 30, **ANN ARBOR TOUR PROGRAM** contains several new animated shorts by Luke Jaeger, Nadia Roden and other artists. Another good reason to attend is to see 2 live action films by Jay Rosenblatt (he teaches at SF State). Get a theater schedule as 4 different hour long programs are scheduled to be shown over the 4 night run. Fine Arts Cinema, 2451 Shattuck in Berkeley.

NATIONAL NEWS



THE DISNEY FAMILY HELPS SAVE WALT'S FIRST STUDIO The Walt and Lily Disney Foundation has donated \$450,000 towards the restoration of the building in Kansas City.

A non-profit saved the structure from the wrecking ball by buying it for \$12,500 in 1996. They plan to restore the 2nd story where the original studio was housed and turn the 1st floor into a theater. The Disney Studio has declined to contribute to the project.

DISNEY HAS MORE LAWSUITS TO CONTEND WITH One new legal mess covered by the press is over the merchandise rights to Tinkerbell. The company New Tinkerbell has held those rights since 1952 (before Disney's *Peter Pan* came out). Their products were sold by the theme parks until last year. Now Disney is selling their own line of Tinkerbell products so the lawyers are making \$\$\$...

The widow of Louis Prima wants royalties that she claims were unpaid since *Jungle Book* came out on DVD and video. Her husband was the voice of King Louis of the Apes. Disney claims their contract with Prima did not include royalties for new technologies that might use his performance. Phil Harris, who sang *Bear Necessities* in the film, sued over a similar issue and settled out of court.

Disney has been fighting over the merchandise rights to *Winnie the Pooh* characters in court since 1992. This case started over a 1983 contract that didn't include payment for video and computer software royalties. In June it was discovered Disney destroyed documents concerning the case so the case was once again in the news.

FILM FORUM IN NY IS PRESENTING PROGRAMS OF 3D CLASSICS INCLUDING A BUGS BUNNY CARTOON Bugs only made one cartoon in 3D, *Lumberjack Rabbit* with Yosemite Sam as his co-star. (2D prints are shown on TV). It shares a program with *The House of Wax*. Sept. 22-28

ITVS HAS ANNOUNCED THEY ARE FUNDING THE COMPLETION OF AN HOUR DOCUMENTARY ON JOHN & FAITH HUBLEY. The Hubley project is by Sybil Delgaudio and Patty Wineapple, the team that made the outstanding 4 part *Animated Women* series. One half-hour show in that series was on Faith Hubley. The new program will be *Independent Spirits: The John and Faith Hubley Story*.

FIGURES OF SPEECH, FUNDED BY ITVS WILL AIR ON PBS THIS FALL *Figures of Speech* is a series of 2 to 6 minute interstitials by Tommy Pallotta and Bob Sabiston. They used digital technology to turn real people into animated caricatures.

ADULT ENGLISH ANIMATION FANS ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO A NEW ANIMATED SERIES ON THE BBC It is *The Big Knights* by Mark Baker (*Jolly Rogers, Hill Farm*) and Neville Astley (*Trainspotter*). Advanced screenings of episodes at festivals have won several prizes (best adult series, a prize for the use of the new Cel Action 2D Software, etc.).

TOONZ 2D & 3D CONFERENCE IN LONDON, OCT. 10-11, FEATURES SPEAKERS FROM Wild Brain, Cosgrove Hall, Klasky Csupo, Varga, MTV, BBC, Warner Bros, etc. www.access-conf.com

FESTIVAL IN INDIA IS BRINGING TOP ANIMATORS THERE FOR THEIR OCT. 30 - NOV. 3 CELEBRATION The invited presenters who have confirmed they are attending the 2nd "Week With the Masters" include Bill Plympton, Joanna Priestley, Gerald Potterton, Piet Kroons, Will Vinton, R.O. Blechman, David Fine and Normand Roger. The event is produced by Toonz Animation India. The company is in production on the TV series *Turtle Island* for Mimosa Productions of Canada.

MOST OF ZAGREB'S TOP PRIZES WENT TO EXCELLENT FILMS ALREADY SEEN IN THE BAY AREA *When the Day Breaks* won the grand prize. Other prizes went to *Fishing* (from PDI), *Old Man and the Sea*, *At the End of the Earth*, *Village of Idiots* and *My Grandmother Ironed the King's Shirts*.

NEW IMPROVED VIDEO LUNCH BOX MAY BE RELEASED SOON "Lunch Box Synch" will offer a sharper picture, 10,000 frames of storage, the ability to add synch sound, and other fine features not now available. It will premiere in Sept. at Ottawa if the product is ready to be shown to the public.

Another possible hot tip is the PD 100A camcorder. A review said it shoots animation with good results, but it isn't clear if it shoots 3 frames at a time like other cameras, or if there is finally a single frame camera available.

PHOTO-REALISTIC CGI CHARACTERS IN FEATURES MAY BE COMING TO THE SCREEN *Final Fantasy: The Movie* will be a completely animated with photo realistic images according to Square Productions, Honolulu. There is a trailer for the production at www.finalfantasy.com/start-f.

New Line has announced Al Pacino will play opposite a cgi character in the proposed feature *Simone*.

DOES NBC HAVE ANOTHER ANIMATED PRIME TIME FLOP? The latest show is *Sammy* with the voice of David Spade. The first show in August got a poor rating.

BILL PLYMPTON HAS NOW COMPLETED THE ANIMATION ON HIS NEXT FEATURE His *Mutant Alien* project is now in post-production.

THE CUMMULATIVE BOX OFFICE GROSSES FOR 2000 ARE:

- #1 *Mission Impossible 2*, \$212.6 million
- #2 *Gladiator*, \$181.6 million
- #3 *Perfect Storm*, \$170.48 million
- #4 *Scary Movie*, \$144.8 million
- #5 *The X Men*, \$143.9 million
- #6 *Dinosaur*, \$133.776 million
- #11 *Chicken Run*, \$99.9 million
- #13 *Klumps*, \$93.99 million
- #23 *Fantasia 2000*, \$58.3 million
- #30 *Hollow Man*, \$50.3 million
- #33 *Pokemon 2*, \$40.7 million
- #36 *Space Cowboys*, \$39.2 million (1st 10 days)
- #40 *Flintstones: Viva Rock Vegas*, \$35.2 million
- #48 *Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle*, \$24.66 million
- #50 *Titan A. E.*, \$22.64 million
- #65 *Thomas and the Magic Railroad*, \$13.28 million

The above comes from *The Movie Times*, Aug. 16, 2000. It does not list *T. Rex*, an Imax film that has grossed \$32.89 million. Keep in mind the charts do not list production costs, grosses outside of the US, or how much of the gross actually gets back to the producers.

INTERNET NEWS

MACROMEDIA PROFITS UP 85% for the first quarter this year. They took in \$94.4 million this year. There are now over 1/2 million Flash authors and there have been over 180 million Flash downloads.

Time Warner had a record breaking 2nd quarter. Profits were up 12% (\$1.38 billion on a gross of \$7.08 billion).

AARDMAN'S ANGRY KID SETS AN INTERNET RECORD One million people saw the series on the Internet in just 7 weeks. It is on the Atom Film web site.

Spike and Mike showed *Angry Kid* episodes in their "classic" festival package this year. The star is a brat that throws temper tantrums. Not my cup of tea, but a lot of people must be talking about it. KC

LIL' PIMP MAY BECOME A FLASH FEATURE to be distributed by Columbia Pictures. The web cartoon is about a 9 year old pimp who scams and hustles. Yes, the kid makes money from prostitution. Joe Roth, former Disney chairman and now head of Revolution Studio, is behind this project. The announcement on AWN's *Flash* said the project is "more of a publicity tool for the series." (Is a child in the sex trade the best a former big cheese from Disney can do? KC)

CREATIVE PLANET, THE NEW OWNERS OF AWN, GET \$38 MILLION MORE IN FINANCING They publish several Internet trade publications including *Animation World Magazine* (purchased last year from Acme owned by Ron Diamond). Part of the new funds will be used to develop new technology.

NEW CHUCK JONES CHARACTER TO APPEAR IN WEB SERIES Thomas T. Wolf gets hit by something falling every time somebody yells "timber" according to a story on AWN. The wolf and company will premiere on WB.com and Entertaimdom in November. Nancy Cartwright, the voice of Bart Simpson, will do the voice of Earl Squirrel on the show.

DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT NETWORK (DEN) IS BANKRUPT People involved are telling the press about executives getting outrageous salaries (the CEO made \$1.2 million last year plus a \$274,000 bonus). DEN is also accused of selling off assets in a possibly fraudulent manner (laser printers that cost \$2,000 were sold for \$300). About \$60 million had been invested in the company. Rumor has it that a new, slightly different company has been formed by former employees of DEN.

ICEBOX.COM ANGERS ASIAN-AMERICANS BY RUNNING A RACIST ANIMATED SHOW *Animation Blast* reports that Daphne Kirk, director of Organization of Chinese Americans, finds the bucked-toothed butler named Mr. Wong "an outrage, humiliating and debasing attack." *Animation Blast* calls the *Mr Wong* show "stupidly offensive" and "mindless." It was created by writers who had once worked on *South Park*.

The Chronicle (Aug. 16) reprinted a *LA Times* story that spent a lot of ink defending the show. They ran the following quote by an Asian actor, "The Internet generation is less sensitive. In a way, people who care about racism are portrayed as dinosaurs." They ran the results of a pole run by an Asian web site - 20% found the show "totally offensive;" 33% said "offensive, but laughed;" 19% said it was an expression of free speech and 28% said "funny as hell." Although we do not know if the free speech voters found it offensive we can say at least 50% of the voters found it offensive. Isn't that a good reason to call it racist?

A FINE GUIDE TO ANIMATION ON THE INTERNET IS PUBLISHED BY YACK.COM The free site is an on-line magazine with sections for music, sports, sex, animation, books, etc. The animation guide is quite impressive as it lists hundreds of works in 6 categories (Anime, classics, stop-motion, contemporary, digital and interactive). The titles range from public domain cartoon classics with Bugs Bunny, Betty Boop, etc. to recent releases. There are lots of Aardman titles (from *Creature Comforts* to the *Angry Kid* series), works by local artists including Tim Hittle (*Canhead*), works seen in recent Spike and Mike packages, etc. Caution: The captions describing the works are dubious at best (probably written by people who haven't seen the works).

AWN publishes a weekly guide to new Internet animated shows. It lists hundreds of episodes on their *AWN Flash* service (available as a subscription service). It is informative and well written. All of a sudden there are dozens of sites offering animated shows. *AWN's Flash* knows about most of them.

INTERNET SITES FROM ITALY Animator Bruno Bozzetto has a site in English at www.bozzetto.com. www.fumetti.org "e il sito dell'Anonima Fumetti con una montagna di informazioni, link, e servizi per appassionati, professionisti, curiosi, studenti del fumetto a 360." ASIFA Italy also recommends www.favolandia.com.

CARTOONIST UNION IS OFFERING NEW INTERNET COMPANIES A SPECIAL CONTRACT It doesn't call for different wages for various job classifications, but it does offer employees a benefit package that costs less than similar packages at non-union shops.

NOT FUNNY STUFF

HOLLYWOOD EXECUTIVES DO NOT SEEM TO BE SKILLED AT SPOTTING FLOPS AHEAD OF TIME by Karl Cohen. The *Sunday Datebook* ran an article saying turning old TV shows into features doesn't work any more. Other excuses in the press have been given for recent failures, but I have yet to hear anyone blame the executives who green lighted and oversaw the productions that failed.

Titan A.E. may have looked good as an idea on paper, but somebody at Fox should have put their foot down after work on the soundtrack had started. The voice talent comes across as flat and boring so either the script was at fault and/or the direction of the voice actors was all wrong. Don Bluth delivered beautiful images, but why did Fox let him proceed with the animation when he was animating to a dull, dated and boring soundtrack?

Fox woke up when the accountants showed them the red ink, but it was too late. They closed down Bluth's studio and put a lot of animators on unemployment. Bill Mechanic, CEO of Fox resigned. It would have been wiser if Fox had rethought the project at an earlier stage.

Fox is not out of the animation biz. They are supposed to release Henry Selick's *Monkey Bone* in Nov. see next article Chris Wedge of Blue Sky in NY State (Oscar for *Bunny*) is developing the cgi feature *Ice Age* for Fox. Fox also has animation development deals with the Farrelly Brothers and Steve Oedekerk of Thumb.com.

Rocky and Bullwinkle suffered from executives who were also asleep at the wheel. It should not have been released with an awful ad campaign. As a lover of the original TV show I was expecting ads full of brilliant lines. Nobody was laughing when I saw the previews in a theater. The TV show was known for its humor so when the trailer isn't funny and reviewers and friends don't get excited about the jokes, why go?

I was also put off by the attempt to make Robert De Niro, Jason Alexander and the other live actors look as if they belonged in a cartoon. *Roger Rabbit* worked because we accepted the idea that real people could interact with cartoon characters.

The best reason to see the film is the animation by people that many of us know at ILM and Wild Brain. Wild Brain's 12 minutes of 2D animation looks great and ILM's crew did lots of amazing complex shots.

I didn't see *Thomas and the Magic Railroad*, but I enjoyed the TV show (I enjoyed watching Ringo). I like the idea of talking trains, but I understand the producers of this show saved money and didn't bother to have talking mouths on their engines. Without moving lips...

Finally there is Disney's *Dinosaurs*. While it is selling a lot of tickets, it wasn't the hit Disney wanted. (The film took many years to make and cost countless millions.) I found it to be an exciting film until the action stopped and the beasts started to talk. I believe it was a major mistake to have realistic looking animals talk. Cartoon characters that talk are perfectly acceptable, but you break the suspension of disbelief when ultra-realistic animals speak their minds. I feel the executives who approved the look would have had a better film if they had used more stylized animals. I never got completely back into the film once the illusion was shattered. I became a detached viewer and kept thinking about the quality of the animation instead of letting my mind flow with the story. (It also bothered me that the beasts were starving and dying of thirst, yet they looked clean and healthy.)

PS: We should applaud the executives who apparently left Nick Park and Peter Lord alone and let them turn out what was my best animated film experience this summer. If you haven't seen *Chicken Run*, see it on a big screen if you can.

HENRY SELICK'S NEXT FEATURE IS (WAS?) SUPPOSED TO OPEN IN NOVEMBER. WHY IS THERE A NEWS BLACKOUT ABOUT THIS FEATURE? by Karl Cohen. I suspect something is wrong with the project since Fox has repeatedly turned down requests by the press for news items, interviews and articles about *Monkey Bone*. Fox has reserved several names for web sites about the film, but they are not yet on line (www.monkeybone.com, etc.) The film is (was?) supposed to open Nov. 3, but *Entertainment Weekly* doesn't list it as being scheduled to open.

I found two "reviews" of a test screening on *Ain't It Cool News* (Aug. 3). One called the first half "morbid and twisted and funny...but the last third goes off track with slapstick comedy and zany misadventures." The writer also noted "odd pacing." The second writer said "...editing pace were so off that the movie could end up a complete mess...second half was typical Jim Carrey-type slapstick." Both writers hinted Selick/Fox are not sure of the film's audience. Lots of body sounds and penis jokes for kids mixed in with some intelligent material for adults.

In Aug. a Fox rep. told an editor for whom I write that some footage was being reshot. They didn't say why.

Fans of Selick have published cast and plot information on the web, but only one or two stills have been sneaked out (colored photos of stuffed monkey toys based on the film are available on the web). When the animation was in production in San Francisco at the Custer Street Stage the crew was asked not to discuss the project with the public. (The animation was shot using the blue screen process, so it could be matted into other footage later.)

continued next page

Since Fox lost millions on *Titan A.E.* and they will have to spend millions more if they release *Monkey Bone*, perhaps they are rethinking what they are going to do. As a long time Selick fan, I hope that if needed, they will make the desired changes and release the film on schedule (or in the not too distant future).

A GREAT NEW BOOK



THE MOOSE THAT ROARED: THE STORY OF JAY WARD, BILL SCOTT, A FLYING SQUIRREL AND A TALKING MOOSE, by Keith Scott, St. Martin's Press, New York, 2000, about 460 pages with 35 or 40 black and white illustrations, \$27.95 hardbound. Reviewed by Karl Cohen.

Being able to read 2 important new books about animation in the same year is a rare treat. Michael Barrier's *Hollywood Cartoons* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1999) is an exceptional contribution to our understanding of the development of theatrical animation (reviewed in our April newsletter), and now Keith Scott's *The Moose That Roared* honors people who pioneered limited animation made for television. Fortunately J. Ward's studio produced some of the funniest TV cartoons ever made, so the book is not only an authoritative account, it is also a delight to read.

Scott's book bears almost no resemblance to *The Rocky and Bullwinkle Book*, a fancy over-sized coffee table book published in 1996. The book from 1996 was designed to please the Ward family. It was disliked by many J. Ward fans as it barely mentioned some of his productions and omitted others completely. It filled up the pages with illustrations, trivia, plot details and cute graphic designs. It only mentioned Bill Scott (not related to Keith Scott, the author of the new book) three or four times even though he was Ward's co-producer, head writer, the voices of Bullwinkle and other characters, and did a thousand other things for the studio. It also failed to explain that much of the show was produced in Mexico, making it the first animated "run-away" production. It was made outside the US to reduce labor costs (non-union) and that resulted in numerous mistakes, headaches and other problems.

The 1996 book was simplistic and focused on Ward and his most famous show. It never even mentioned Alex Anderson, the man who created Rocky, Bullwinkle, *Crusader Rabbit*, *Dudley Do-Right*, and other characters. Ward was a producer with a business degree from Harvard. It was Anderson, Ward's partner and life-long friend, who had worked in animation and conceived and developed a form of animation that could be made within the financial

constraints of television. Working together in Berkeley, California, they pioneered limited animation. In 1950, *Crusader Rabbit* became their first show to be broadcast on a regular basis. I consider the development of limited animation a major development, yet the author of the 1996 book saw no reason to mention it.

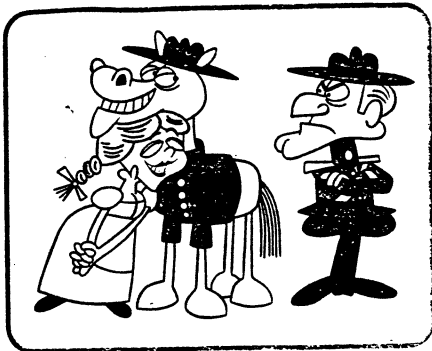
The new publication is a concise history. After a brief overview and introduction, the book provides a detailed chronological account of the life and times of J. Ward, his associates, their work, fun, follies and a few major blunders. While it is lovingly written by a life-long fan who became the world's foremost scholar on the studio, it is honest, insightful and sometimes unflattering. It is so thorough, it not only provides detailed information about the studio's major accomplishments, it also covers unsold pilots, their production of commercials, wacky publicity stunts, biographical information about everybody involved with the productions, problems with contracts, networks, agencies, labor and censors, plus a great deal more that you probably don't expect to find in a book about people making humorous cartoons.

The book provides the longest and best published account of the Ward-Anderson collaborations including some of the problems they faced trying to get *Crusader Rabbit* aired. NBC approved the proposal for the project in 1948, but in 1949 they decided not to go ahead with their plans to make it a network show. Jerry Fairbanks, who had a 5 year exclusive distribution deal with NBC, decided to release the 5-minute program on a station-by-station basis. It took another year before it aired anywhere on a regular basis. Production stopped after 195 episodes (1951) and the studio eventually closed.

In 1957 William Hanna (without Joe Barbera) joined Mike Lah, Don Driscoll and Don MacNamara to form a company to continue production of the show. They were not told that there was an ongoing legal battle over rights to it. The rights became available when Jerry Fairbanks went bankrupt. Hanna and his associates had started production when they were informed Ward did not own all the rights to the show. The litigation not only ended the project, it resulted in Ward and Anderson being forced to sell their interests in the show to Shull Bonsall who had purchased Fairbank's rights. When I first wrote about this production in the 1980s in *Animatrix*, a UCLA Animation Workshop publication, Hanna called and denied he had any part in the project and claimed that he and Barbera had invented limited animation in the late 50s! I'm glad another author has researched this issue and was able to catch Hanna on a day when he remembered working on the production.

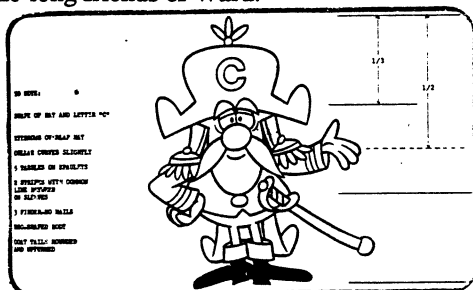
The story of Ward's next project, one that starred a moose and squirrel, is just as carefully recounted. It covers everything from the development of the show's concept to the almost instant success of the show when it first aired November 19, 1959. There is also excellent coverage of other parts of the program including *Peabody's Improbable History* and *Fractured Fairy Tales*. (*Aesops and Son* replaced *Fractured Fairy Tales* for one season and the show's name was changed to *The Bullwinkle Show* when

the program was moved from ABC to a primetime slot on NBC, September 24, 1961. Bill Scott appeared on the first few shows on NBC with a Bullwinkle hand puppet.)



Anyone fascinated with the industry should enjoy the account of how *Rocky and his Friends* ended up being animated in Mexico. The original plan called for the production to go to Japan, but it turned out the studio in Japan didn't exist! The show's first production budget was minuscule compared to the cost of a Hanna-Barbera production from the same time. Keith Scott interviewed the Americans who oversaw the production in Mexico and their accounts explain the numerous problems that resulted. His detailed account even hints at an under-the-table deal that resulted in the show going to Mexico in the first place. (Apparently people with the show's ad agency and/or sponsor owned shares in the Mexican facility).

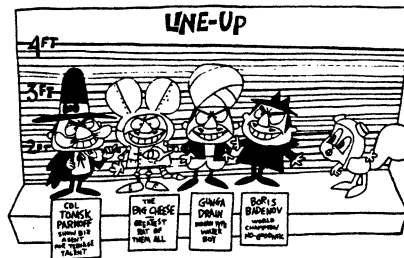
The text covers Ward's later productions including *George of the Jungle*, *Super Chicken*, *Dudley Do-Right*, *Hoppity Hooper*, *Tom Slick*, *Fractured Flickers*, numerous commercials and much more. As the story unfolds you also get a delightful picture of the good times of Jay Ward Productions. There are accounts of zany parties and publicity stunts, surprise company outings to unusual places, and other unexpected moments. Anderson, who had gone into advertising, occasionally reappears as do several other life-long friends of Ward.



Trivia fans will enjoy much of the information in the text. My favorite "stupid" fact is that when Action for Children's Television (ACT) pressured TV into adopting politically correct guidelines/censorship in 1977, Cap'n Crunch, a 500 year old pirate, could no longer wear a sword. One fact overlooked by the author is who sang the *George of the Jungle* song? He gives us the names of the composer and song writer, but not Donnie Brooks who sang "George, George, George of the Jungle, watch out for that tree." (I saw him sing it at the Alameda County Fair in the 1980s.) The book also explains why several non-Ward productions were once included with Rocky and Bullwinkle

episodes on TV. This led fans to believe *Underdog*, *Tennessee Tuxedo*, *King Leonardo and his Short Subjects*, *Go Go Gophers*, *Commander McBrag*, etc, were produced by J. Ward Productions. They were actually made by Total Television, a company owned by Peter Piech. Piech also had an interest in the TV distribution of Ward products.

As I read the text I kept noticing that the book didn't give a clear picture as to what Ward was like as a person. Scott saved this complex subject to the next to the last chapter. His account of who Ward was is an excellent piece of research. He quotes extensively from those who best knew the man and he reveals uncomfortable incidents that help explain this man's unusual psyche. The statements sometimes contradict each other, but the confusion helps explain who this wonderful man was.



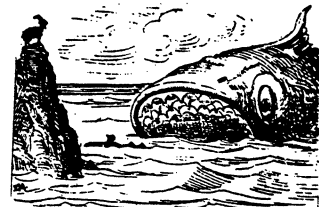
When I met Ward at his store he was quite shy and didn't say much. I saw him come alive when neighborhood kids with skateboards came in the shop. Ward talked with them like he was a close buddy. The first time I visited the store I was researching an article on him. I spoke at length with his wife and once, when she didn't know an answer to an important question, she called him on the phone. I could barely hear him talking to her from the next room. He was famous for not wanting to talk with reporters.

When I finished reading the book I wondered how accurate it was so I called two people who worked closely with Ward. Alex Anderson said, "it was pretty much the way I remembered it." Lucille Bliss, the voice of Crusader Rabbit, enjoyed the book, but felt Scott simplified the complex history of *Crusader*. She said he didn't fully capture the negative personality of the man who ended up with the rights to the show. "It was sugar coated." She was also surprised at how much he knew about her, yet they had never met or talked on the phone.

My only negative criticism of the book is minor. It would have been better had there been a few well placed footnotes. Scott was not present when most of the events in the book took place so footnotes would have been useful. Scott identifies in the text the person he is quoting, but he does not say how he obtained the quotes or information not in quotes. Had there been footnotes, Bliss would have known where the information about her came from. (I am mentioned several times in the text, bibliography and forward, but not all of my contributions to the book are acknowledged.)

Trivia fans take note: Bliss said Scott came close to guessing her age when he wrote "circa 1927," but the date is wrong. She told me, "I can live with it." June Foray, the voice of Rocky, like Bliss never reveals her age. Scott made no attempt to guess it. I suspect Bliss is younger than Foray as

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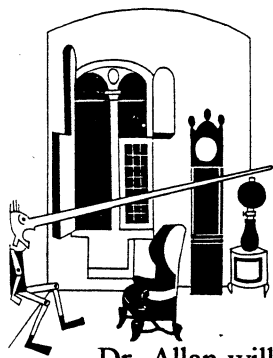


DR. ROBIN ALLAN
BRITISH DISNEY SCHOLAR
WILL DISCUSS

“EUROPEAN INFLUENCES ON WALT DISNEY”

AND SIGN COPIES OF HIS NEW BOOK

TUES. SEPT. 12, 7:30 PM
AT THE EXPLORATORIUM



Dr. Allan will show a selection of rare images that influenced Disney's artists and talk about his years of research. Several years ago he presented ASIFA-SF a slide lecture on his work-in-progress and people were quite impressed with the insights they got from his talk. Since then he has completed his book *Walt Disney and Europe: European Influences on the Animated Feature Films of Walt Disney*, John Libbey & Co., Sydney, 1998. Available in North America from Indiana University Press.

Allan's research is based on interviews with artists who created features and shorts at Disney, and on records in the studio's archives (story conference notes, etc.). Allan spent over 10 years working on this project. The book covers some of the classic shorts, features from *Snow White* to *Jungle Book*, Disney's choice of music for *Fantasia* and other films, European influences on the design and architecture of Disneyland, etc. This a rare chance to hear Allan discuss this fascinating subject.

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Foray was doing network radio shows in the mid-40s. Should we care how old people are? What is important is they are both great voice actresses. (According to an article the new *Animation Blast*, Foray was born in the late 19th Century.)

We are fortunate that Thomas Dunne Books, a division of St. Martin's Press was willing to publish Scott's account of the studio. It is an exceptional contribution to our knowledge of early TV animation, a subject ignored by most authors. Fortunately Scott got to interview almost everyone connected with the studio (several of the key figures are no longer alive) and is an excellent writer.

AN UNUSUAL ANIMATION MAGAZINE



One of the drawings from Ray Patterson's animation test that helped promote him to animator at Disney.

ANIMATION BLAST #5 is a good buy at \$3 for 36 pages of rare material. Paul Naas wrote about several layout tips Maurice Noble shared with him. There is a fine interview with Ray Patterson who animated Tom and Jerry, worked at Disney until the strike, owned his own company in the 60s, etc. My favorite items were 13 funny cartoons drawn by Hank Ketcham after he left Disney (1941?) and before he

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LOOK FOR US AT WWW.ASIFA-SF.ORG

This issue was written by Karl Cohen and proofread by Pete Davis. The production crew included Shirley Smith, Tara Packard and Ron Seawright. Subscriptions are \$18 a year.

started *Denis the Menace*. There are also reviews, work by other artists, etc. Elmo Aardvark is the cover story.

Tower Records sells the magazine. So does Comic Relief on University Ave. in Berkeley. Buy it by mail for \$3 from PO Box 260491 Encino. CA 91426-0491

You can also visit *Animation Blast* at a fine web site www.animationblast.com

EMPLOYMENT

DENVER'S ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN SEEKS SEVERAL PEOPLE FOR FULL TIME TEACHING POSITIONS Edward Bakst, the new department's chair, seeks traditionally trained people to help develop this new animation program. He hopes to build a program that stresses the creative process and offers classes in experimental animation, stop-motion and other unusual subjects along with character and computer animation. There is also an opening for someone to teach the history of international animation, script writing, etc. For further information call (800) 888-ARTS

FESTIVALS

BILBAO INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILMS Oct. 15 deadline for prints, Sept. 15 for forms. John "Dirly Birdy" Dilworth says this is a fine event. They flew him there, paid for the hotel, etc. No entry fee. Prize money in animation category. Films that have won prizes in other European festivals are not eligible. 16mm & 35mm. www.fic-bilbao.com (34) 94 424 8698 37 Colon de Larreategui, 4th floor, PO Box 579, 48009 Bilbao, Spain



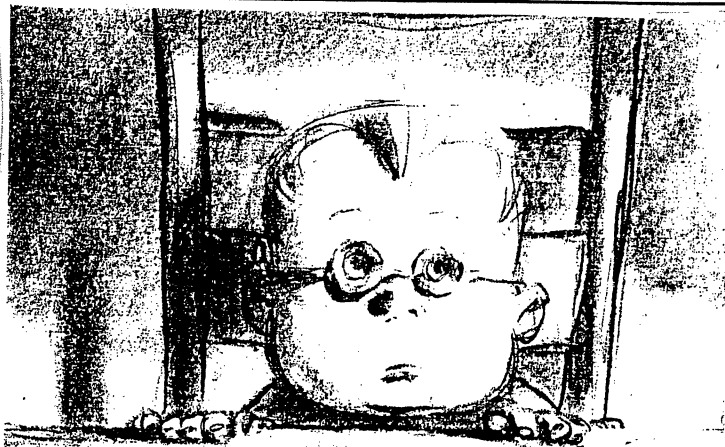
John Peterson
12 Bishop Lane
Menlo Park, CA 94025

ASIFA

SAN FRANCISCO

The International Film Association
P.O. Box 14516 • San Francisco, CA 94114

SEPTEMBER, 2001



DON'T MISS OUR 35MM SCREENING OF "HUBERT'S BRAIN," AN AWARD WINNING FILM FROM WILD BRAIN *Hubert's Brain* is an original 17 minute short about a boy genius who doesn't quite fit in, and a brain who is looking for the perfect fit. Directed by Phil Robinson, *Hubert's Brain* recently won a first place prize at Synthesis 8 in Belgium, a first place prize at World Animation Celebration in LA and an honorable mention at the Nashville International Film Festival.

ASIFA-SF is presenting a 35mm screening of it at the Red Vic on Saturday, Sept. 15 at 11:15 AM (free, public invited). Shorts by Nina Paley, Dan McHale, Scott Kravitz and Jeremy Solterbeck plus classic 1930's b/w cartoons will also be shown. See our event flyer for details.

WILD BRAIN WINS 4 AWARDS AT WAC, ILM WINS 1 *Hubert's Brain* won 1st place for Best Computer-Assisted Animation, Professionally Produced. Michaela Pavlatova's *Graveyard* won a 1st for Best Interactive Animation Produced for the Web. Tod Polson and Dave Thomas' *Mantelope* won a 1st for Best Animated Comedy Produced for the Web. *Swingtown* was awarded a 2nd for Best Animated Science Fiction Produced for the Web. *Swingtown* is the futuristic, pulp noir city where zoot-suited mutant rats challenge gun toting beauties and spar with hideous aliens.

ILM got the top TV commercial award for a Budweiser ad produced by Rick Shulze. (There may be more local prize winners, but these were the only ones I know about from the *Hollywood Reporter* and an e-mail from Wild Brain.)

THE RAT RACE'S ANIMATED TITLES WERE DONE BY WILD BRAIN Animated photo collages of the film's

"racers" do animated antics in the title sequences. Julia Tortolani designed the 3 minute segment. John Korellis was the storyboard artist and the photoshop artists were Kevin Bell, Scott Adams and Kristine Borges.



WILD BRAIN GOES GLOBAL WITH LAUNCH OF A SUBSIDIARY COMPANY IN MUNICH. Wild Brain, Inc. has opened Wild Trixx Media GmbH in Munich. It will find overseas co-production partners for television and feature film projects, coordinate sales and merchandising for the company's future and existing programming, such as Wild Brain's new 26-episode series *Poochini*, throughout Europe, and attract European-based commercials.

Prinz Franz von Auersperg, supervisory board chairman of Syntek Capital and former senior executive with BMG and EM.TV, will lead the Wild Trixx Supervisory Board. Wild Trixx Media GmbH will be headed by managing director Curtis Briggs. "Given the global nature of our business, we felt it imperative to establish a presence in Europe to provide support for our current programming efforts, identify future production and distribution partners and expand our leading commercials business," said Wild Brain's chief executive officer Jeff Ulin.

CHRIS LANIER'S "ROMANOV" IS A FINALIST AT THE PIXIE AWARDS *Romanov* is nominated for the best serialized web show. The 2nd annual Pixie Awards want to become the "Oscars of the Web." Lanier will be at the Roosevelt Hotel (LA) ceremony wearing a tux. Good luck on Sept 16. *Romanov* appears on Wild Brain.com.

WESTERN IMAGES WILL FOCUS THEIR FUTURE SOLELY ON SPECIAL EFFECTS WORK, CGI ANIMATION AND DESIGN WORK plus related editorial services. The facility's rental of linear edit suites, Henry, telecine and other services will be terminated. The company will expand its efforts in long-form broadcast and feature film effects. As a result of their restructuring, five people were laid off. Four were related to fax work and the fifth was an executive producer. Michael Cunningham is their president and CEO and Western's owner is Robert Stover.

MONDO MEDIA DOES "AMERICAN PIE 2" CAMPAIGN for Universal Studios. The campaign blends advertising and original content in a new advertising package called the Mondo Side Show. The ads/shows will be Web-syndicated. The shows will include an interactive game, a viral marketing component, a commercial and mini Website. The show should boost the film's pre-opening awareness.

MONDO MEDIA ANNOUNCES FOUR POPULAR SERIES TO AIR ON MICROSOFT'S WINDOWS-MEDIA.COM. They are *Elmo Aardvark Outer Space Detective*, *Thugs on Film*, *Happy Tree Friends* and *This Modern World*. Douglas Kay, president of Mondo Media says, "WindowsMedia.com carries our shows to a whole new audience, extending our reach to the benefit of our advertisers."



THE SANDMAN



ON THE PASSING OF ANIMATOR PAUL BERRY In early July I was shocked and saddened to read an obituary for Paul Berry, a talented and outrageous British stop-motion animator. (He had a wild head of bright red hair.) He lived/worked in the Bay Area for several years. His film *Sandman* stands out as a brilliant mature work for adults. I also have fond memories of him at parties and his presenting part of an ASIFA-SF event. The animation community has lost a remarkable individual. This is what awn.com published:

ANIMATOR PAUL BERRY PASSES AWAY

Remembered by Barry Purves

It is with such sadness that I write a few lines about my colorful friend and colleague Paul Berry. He died on Tuesday, 26th June, in Manchester, with his partner Graham, and his sister Denise, at his bedside. He had been ill since February with a brain tumor. That he should die at 40 is such a tragedy; that he should die with so much more brilliant work ahead of him is a loss to those who were not fortunate enough to know him.

I had known Paul for nearly twenty years, and though our careers followed similar paths, we never actually worked together...to my great regret. Paul joined Cosgrove Hall in Manchester around 1983, animating Mr. Toad, amongst other characters, in *The Wind in the Willows*. Even then Paul's amazing skill was clear. Every action with the puppets was clear, and full of character and meaning. Other films he worked on there were *The Fool of the World*, *The Flying Ship*, *Truckers* and *Noddy*. In 1992, he made *The Sandman* with Ian Mackinnon and Colin Batty. This film really made the world take notice. Not just because it won so many awards, including an Oscar nomination, and not just because it took animation into new and darker realms, but because here was a standard of animation that really had not been seen before.

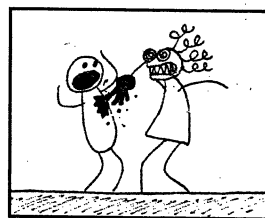
It was not surprising that Paul was taken to America to work on *Nightmare Before Christmas*, and subsequently *James and the Giant Peach* and *Monkey Bone*, as well as dozens of brilliant commercials. The standards he set in his own animation on these films, and in his direction of others, were an inspiration to his crew and fellow animators.

His characters were clear, precise, eccentric, funny, dark, and very, very credible...knocking for six any hint of cute 'n cuddly and bland often associated with some animation. The fluidity of his animation betrayed little sign of his tremendous technique...his puppets just lived, and will happily continue to live, inspiring new audiences, and inspiring new animators with the skill. Seldom has anyone achieved such standards and such respect from colleagues.

Paul's death is an enormous loss to so many. His caustic wit, his energy, his love of the dark and bizarre, his generosity, his infectious cackle, and his red hair will be so tremendously missed.

Thank you Paul

PROGRAM COMING TO THE PFA CELEBRATES JAZZ AND ABSTRACTION IN BEAT ERA FILMS MADE IN SF IN THE 50'S On Tuesday, Oct. 2 the Pacific Film Archive will show a remarkable program honoring several local film artists. Their program notes read, "Tonight we celebrate the Beat Generation with a selection of films by the San Francisco film artists of that era. Hy Hirsh's films include a pioneer oscilloscope film *Enerji*; the lush *Autumn Spectrum*, filmed in the canals of Amsterdam; and *Scratch Pad*, in which Hirsh painted and scratched imagery over elaborate optical-printed footage. Younger San Francisco filmmakers, including Jordan Belson and Harry Smith, learned filmmaking techniques and borrowed equipment from Hirsh. Belson's *Mandala* synchs Balinese gamelan music with images painted on long scrolls while *Caravan* captures the "on the road" mantra of the Beat Generation. Harry Smith's *Film No. 3*, painted directly on blank film, was sometimes screened at the jazz club Bop City as a live light show. Bay Area painter Patricia Marx used details from her paintings cut to Dizzy Gillespie jazz for *Things to Come*. In the later '50s, Belson began producing Vortex Concerts at the Planetarium in San Francisco. James Whitney's *Yantra* was one of the pieces shown on the planetarium dome. At the same time, James's older brother John was inventing a special animation stand controlled by an analog computer. His film *Catalog* demonstrates the different effects he could create. In New York, Shirley Clarke synched her lyrical *Bridges-Go-Round* with a jazz track." A related program on Oct. 9 will be discussed in the October newsletter.



AH L'AMOUR

Don Hertzfeldt (2 min.)

Billy's Balloon
by Don Hertzfeldt of U.S.A.
WINNER - Grand Jury Prize
for Best Short Film 1999
Slamdance (5:20)



LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD - DON HERTZFELDT WHO GOT AN OSCAR NOMINATION THIS YEAR FOR "REJECTED," GREW UP IN FREMONT He attended Mission San Jose High School before going to college in Southern California. Thanks ASIFA-SF member Steven Ng for this information. He works with Don's mother. It's a small world after all.

ADDITIONAL FOOTAGE FROM MONKEYBONE IS ON THE DVD An ASIFA-SF member recently viewed *Monkeybone* on DVD, having missed it in the theatre. He felt the released version of the film was choppy and the storyline unclear, two good reasons for it being withdrawn quickly from distribution. After viewing the additional scenes and footage on the DVD it was evident that important parts of the storyline were lost on the editing room floor and that the film was poorly cut. He couldn't understand why it wasn't simply released in DVD as a director's cut version as restoring the footage to the film would have made the story clearer and would have explained the relationship of the cartoonist to his alter-ego Monkeybone.

NIK AND NANCY PHELPS OF THE SPROCKET ENSEMBLE ARE GUESTS AT THE 8TH KROK INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL IN UKRAINE They are representing Nina Paley's *Fetch* as they created the soundtrack. Nik plans to play a lot of music as they sail away. Krok is held on a cruise ship that sails this year from Odessa on the Black Sea to Yalta and other seaports. The event is August 20 to September 2. Then they are off to Germany. The next Bay Area performance of the now world famous Nik Phelps will be Oct. 20 at the Rafael Cinema in San Rafael.

AS DISNEY AND OTHER BIG AND SMALL STUDIOS HAVE MAJOR LAYOFFS, SOME LOCAL COMPANIES ARE FINDING NEW MARKETS FOR THEIR WORK Back in the 1970's when I first began to observe the animation industry it was a seasonal business. For several years Imagination Inc. was the main company hiring animators in San Francisco. Most of the jobs were in Los Angeles and much of the work was producing cartoon series for TV. That work was seasonal as it had to be ready for the start of the fall TV season. Most people worked for only a few months each year. Disney offered full-time jobs producing features, but no one else seemed willing to risk capital needed to explore the possibilities of that format. The demand for animated commercials was small and employment was unpredictable.

Thirty years later the industry is still seasonal to some extent and work still seems to come and go in cycles. What has really changed is the size of the industry and the development of hundreds of new uses for the animators' talents. If you don't know what I mean, look at our website's directory of Bay Area animation companies.

The reason for writing this is to make people aware of new markets for the animators' skills, rather than to bellyache about the recent loss of jobs in some sectors of the industry. Every year I hear about new uses of animation that are rarely written about. At present there is work on a variety of new electronic products needing animation. There is a team of animators producing images for video slot machines. There is a growing market for animation for palm computers. I was just told that a company has unveiled the first pay phone to incorporate animation. At a recent ASIFA-SF event we saw demonstrations of recently produced CD-ROM products. One member of our chapter has been producing forensic animation used by lawyers to show a jury how they claim an event happened. Over the years I've met people employed by NASA and high tech companies that need images that are never seen by the public. I've met several people who have worked on flight simulations for the airline industry and for the military. I also know a woman who was a staff animator at a "think tank" near Palo Alto for several years. Her animation was on secret projects that she still can't discuss.

At this point I was going to write about the growth of video slot machine jobs in our area. The people I had planned to interview were at our terrific Iwerks event and said this unusual industry has grown to about 35 companies. With growth has come consolidation and the company they work for has just been purchased. It will soon be moving to Las Vegas. While they were offered jobs in Nevada, they were also given the option of accepting attractive severance packages. Apparently the team is staying in the Bay Area and the members plan to enjoy the benefits of a corporate buy-out.

Since I can no longer write about a fast growing local company whose work is exciting to players of one armed bandits, I leave you with a short list of companies mentioned in the new *Reel Directory* that offer animation services that haven't been mentioned in this newsletter before. They are:

Bard Sculpture Studio, Damon Bard, 1329 61st St. #D, Emeryville, CA 94608 (510) 594-0615. He builds stop-motion puppets and creates toy prototypes.

Flying Pepper Design, Inc., Richard Pepper, (707) 824-2007 They do animation and effects for broadcast and broadband media using Maya and After Effects. www.fpdesign.com

Lockheed Martin Space Systems Media Services, Bob Vincent, (408) 742-4870, they provide complete video production services. www.imms.imco.com

Presentek, Bill Glenn, (408) 354-6056, They produce 3D motion graphics, character animation and visual effects for broadcast and interactive media. www.presentek.com

PVR Studios, 2331 Third St. San Francisco, CA 94107 (415) 864-5679 They produce 2D and 3D animation for video and interactive media.

SPAZZCO ANIMATION, 1620 Folsom, SF CA 94103 (415) 551-2692 Their motto is "Spazzco loves cartoons!" They produce work for video, advertising and the web.

Spoon Fed Films, 801 Minnesota St. Loft #1, SF CA 94007 (415) 642-0124 Award winning clay animation.

The Evers Group, Melissa Tench-Stevens, (408) 467-3885 They offer full services from concept to completion including computer graphics. www.eversgroup.com,

FOR LARGE LISTS OF LOCAL COMPANIES SEE THE NEW EDITION OF THE "REEL DIRECTORY" AND GO TO OUR WEB SITE - www.asifa-sf.org

ALSO, ARE WE LEAVING OUT A NEW AREA OF WORK OR COMPANY THAT YOU KNOW ABOUT? LET US KNOW Call Karl Cohen (415) 386-1004 or karlcohen@earthlink.net

FINALLY, ARE YOU DOING FORENSIC ANIMATION? One our board members would like to talk with you. Contact Karl Cohen for details.



ANIMATOR SELLS A "SUPERMAN DAY" AD INSERTED INTO A COMIC IN 1940 FOR OVER \$900 The 4 page promotion on newsprint was inserted into Superman comic books sold in the NYC area before the event. The Superman collector who bought it at an eBay auction believes this may be the last remaining copy of the ad. The man who sold it bought the comic book a few years ago for under \$100. He later sold the comic for a profit and kept the ad

GREAT AMERICA'S ANIMATED 70MM RIDE FILMS ARE LOTS OF FUN IF YOU LIKE SADO-MASOCHISTIC EXPERIENCES by KC Ride films, where you sit in motorized chairs that move to enhance the viewing experience, have been entertaining for me in the past. I've enjoyed TurboRide at Pier 39 and several kinds of ride films at Disneyland and Disneyworld.

Unfortunately, Great America's presentations of 7th *Portal* and *Smash Factory* prove the medium can also be an excruciatingly unpleasant experience. 7th *Portal*, as Great America presents it, is uncomfortable to watch and listen to. The noise/effects tracks are so loud that they drown out the narration. As a result, the film made no sense. What was worse is that every 5 or 10 seconds it felt as if an ice hockey player was slamming into my chair at full force. Since you are supposed to be jerked about, the computer generated animation moved in a similar fashion. I had planned to see the film and then interview somebody connected with the production. That plan has been canceled.

Smash Factory, made by Midland in the E. Bay, was more of the same, but it was made with a sense of humor and it wasn't full of stupid looking supernatural warriors with Darth Vader-like voices. You are supposed to be in a factory with a test dummy as he tries to escape according to a press release. (I wasn't e-mailed a copy until the day after I took the ride.) Bob's wild attempt for freedom goes through passages under construction and through underground caverns. It is full of demolition derby action as he drives into signs, walls, etc. He also has to avoid cartoony devices designed to smash/destroy large objects. The visuals, created using miniature sets and motion controlled cameras, are really entertaining. If the movements of the chair had been a bit less painful, I would have enjoyed the ride a lot more.

I assume the park likes to "turn up the bumps" in their FX Theater as most people who come to the park are there to ride the 10 roller coasters. People have to wear seat belts to watch the films as the rides are that rough. (Attendants check to see that they are properly attached before the films begin.) Having to brace yourself against the chair to soften the blow is no way to see a movie.

The pre-ride videos, shown over and over before you enter the theaters, failed to inform me about what to expect. 7th *Portal* has Stan Lee telling us how great the animation is while awful 2D clips made using Flash (not from the ride) are shown. Midland made a clever and entertaining teaser using found footage, but it doesn't enlighten us about the ride's premise.

There was a pleasant low-tech virtual reality concession at the park that charges \$6 for a nice 3 minute experience. The headset has a pine fragrance built into it so it combines smell with new age images of forests.

There is also a big IMAX theater with seats that don't move. Their present attraction is an excellent live action documentary about sailing. They were also showing the Sigfried and Roy film in the evening for an additional admission charge (I hated that film).

SF FILM FESTIVAL SELLING POSTERS FROM THEIR ARCHIVE Some date back to the '60's and they come from many nations around the world. It happens Friday, October 5 and Saturday, October 6 at the San Francisco Film Centre, 39 Mesa Street in the Presidio, San Francisco.

MARIKO HOSHI AND VICTORIA LIVINGSTONE FEATURED IN *AV VIDEO MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER MAGAZINE* The article "Wonder Women: Seven Animators Burn Up the Market" (July, 2001) included nice interviews and colored photos of both women. Hoshi, who made the film *Hello Dolly*, works at PDI and graduated from the Academy of Art with a MFA. Livingstone, who made the film *Windows*, works at ILM and is a graduate of SF State. She has animated Jar Jar, baby dinosaurs and a lot of other cool things.

LOCAL SCREENINGS

Saturday, September 15, 11:15 AM **ASIFA-SF presents a SNEAK PREVIEW of HUBERT'S BRAIN**, the new 17 minute CG film in 35mm from Wild Brain, directed by Phil Robinson and produced by Nina Rappaport. With animated independent shorts in 35mm: **NINA PALEY'S FETCH** and **PANDORAMA**, **DAN McHALE'S SEX PUDDING**, **SCOTT KRAVITZ'S THE MAGIC TRICK**, **JEREMY SOLTERBECK'S MOVING ILLUSTRATIONS OF MACHINES**, and (if the sound track is finished) a clay animated short by **JEROLD HOWARD**. Plus, classic 1930's theatrical cartoons in 35mm with **Betty Boop**, **Porky Pig** and a **Fleischer bouncing ball cartoon!!!** Don't miss seeing Wild Brain's latest work on a big screen.. At the Red Vic on Haight Street.

Mon. Sept. 17 - Sun. Sept. 23, 7:30 pm, *Cane Toads, An Unnatural History* with a **Flip the Frog cartoon, What a Life "by the legendary Ub Iwerks."** At the Fine Arts Cinema, 2451 Shattuck Ave. in Berkeley.

Oct 2 **KINETICA 3 SERIES: JAZZ AND ABSTRACTION IN THE BEAT ERA FILM**, Newly preserved prints of rarely seen films by Hy Hirsh and other San Francisco film artists in the '50s. The program also includes films by Jordan Belson, Harry Smith, Patricia Marx, John and James Whitney and Mary Ellen Bute. At the Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley.

October 9, **CONTEMPORARY VISUAL MUSIC** at 7:30 pm. Premiere of *BARDO* by Jordan Belson, plus work by Sky David, Joost Rekveld, Richard Reeves, Ying Tan, Paul Glabicki, Bob Snyder, Chris Casady and other contemporary artists. At the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley.

NATIONAL NEWS

"THIS SUMMER'S RELEASES ARE ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO STAY HOME AND WATCH TV" After having seen *Atlantis*, *Final Fantasy*, *Tomb Raider*, *Jurassic Park 3* and a few other releases I have to agree with Prescott Wright's statement. Producers have forgotten about creating characters and stories that are engaging. Didn't somebody ever explain what "character development" and "suspension of disbelief" means to the industry's current producers of "summer blockbusters"?

I was going to write an essay about the current state of affairs, but a world famous animator/film critic summed it up eloquently in a recent e-mail to me. He said, **"Have just seen Atlantis which opens here in a couple of weeks. I wept. Was truly moved by the sheer waste of talent."**

A MAJOR JAN SVANKMAJER RETROSPECTIVE WAS HELD AT FILM FORUM IN NEW YORK IN JULY It lasted a week and they showed 15 of his shorts and his 4 features. The *NY Times* called him "one of cinema's most visionary surrealists."

OSCAR WINNER MICHAEL DUDOK DE WIT DONATED TO CHARITY THE HDTV HE WON FOR GIVING THE SHORTEST ACCEPTANCE SPEECH (18 seconds) Michael De Wit, who won an Oscar for *Father and Daughter*, gave away the high definition television that he won. He lives in London where the electric power and TV standards are different. He gave the set to a home for abused children.

INTERESTED IN THE SEXUAL POLITICS OF SHREK? If so check out the Animation Pimp's awn.com column for July. He takes a closer look at the sexual politics of *Shrek*, "where it's better to promote bestiality than homosexuality." He (Chris Robinson) looks at the film's ending and other issues that most people are oblivious to.

Robinson also wrote an excellent article on **Priit Parn** from Estonia that is on the web at **Salon.com** (July 3, 2001, people section). He discusses the political and social content of his work. He wrote an even better article on Parn (longer and more details) in the current ASIFA International magazine, but it isn't available to people who are not International members.

ASIFA-HOLLYWOOD PRESENTED AN EVENING WITH TOM SITO in July. Sito has been working in the industry for 26 years. He recently co-directed Warner Bros. *Osmosis Jones* and his screen credits include *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty & The Beast*, *Aladdin*, *The Lion King*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, *Pocahontas*, *Fantasia 2000*, *Shrek*, *The Prince Of Egypt*, *Antz*, and *Spirit Of The Cimmarron*. His personal work includes the beautifully animated and politically poignant *Propagandance* (*Animation Celebration*, Vol. 2). He teaches at the University of Southern California and California Institute of the Arts, has written numerous articles about animation, has lectured at NYU, SVA, UCLA, AFI, Microsoft, Sheridan College and other institutions and has been President of the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonist's Union Local 839 for many years.

ASIFA-HOLLYWOOD HAS HELD A SERIES OF UNUSUAL EVENTS Among their summer events were a sneak preview of John Kricfalusi's *The Ripping Friends*, Leslie Iwerks signing her book on Ub Iwerks, and Jerry Beck showing "Groovy, Psychedelic Hippie Toons" and a program of "Saturday Morning Crap."

ASIFA-Hollywood's **ANNIE AWARDS**, America's most prestigious animation event, will be Sat. Nov. 10. For information: 721 S. Victory Blvd., Burbank, CA 91502 818-842-8330 www.asifa-hollywood.org

BILL PLYMPTON TO PRESENT A MASTER ANIMATION WORKSHOP TO MEMBERS OF THE QUICKDRAW ANIMATION SOCIETY IN ALBERTA, CANADA For \$75 a person they get 3 days of instruction at the end of September, plus secrets on how to survive as an independent animator. Each student will also get a signed original Plympton drawing.

ALL WARNER BROS. STORES TO CLOSE. Warner Bros. announced that AOL Time Warner will close all of its Warner Bros. Studio Stores by the end of October. The move will cut 3,800 jobs and is attributed to the company's failure to find a buyer for the troubled chain of stores. At its peak there were 130 stores worldwide.

ONCE AGAIN THE WORLD ANIMATION CELEBRATION IN LA GETS MIXED REVIEWS by people who attend major international animation festivals. Gary Schwartz had a great time just hanging out at the pool and talking with people, but he had nothing to say about the events.

Jerry Beck and a second writer on his site had mixed reactions to the WAC. They praised some things, but were quite critical of others. "Like *Animation Magazine*, WAC tries to be everything for everybody, and succeeds at being very little for a small few" according to Beck. "They deliberately priced small outfits like mine out of the event..." Their comments are posted at cartoonresearch.com

If you want to read about a great animation celebration, read Tsvika Oren's review of Annecy in this issue of our newsletter.

STUDY DISCLOSES \$5.847 BILLION GENERATED IN ROYALTY INCOME IN 2000. Licensing proves to be a viable and growing industry according to a new study by the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association (LIMA), in conjunction with the Yale School of Management and the Harvard Business School. According to the report property and trademark owners received royalties of \$5.84 billion from manufacturers who paid for the right to use trademarks, characters, logos and artwork to sell products in the United States in 2000. That represents a \$248 million increase (4.4%) in the last year. The study has found that entertainment/character licensing continues to be the strongest category in the licensing business, maintaining a 44.3% share of the market. Other categories include trademarks, brands and fashion. Now you know why networks want to own licensing rights to work artists create.



STAN LEE STOCK FRAUD SUSPECT ARRESTED IN BRAZIL Brazilian police have arrested Peter Paul, an American accused of cheating U.S. investors out of \$25 million. He has been indicted on fraud charges in the U.S.

Paul has done a number of strange things and many have been reported in past ASIFA-SF Newsletters. One we haven't reported yet is his suing Sen. Hillary Clinton (June, 2001) for allegedly not reporting donations of more than \$2 million he made to her 2000 Senate bid.

Paul told reporters that he didn't want to return to the U.S. because he was the victim of political persecution. He also denied the stock fraud charges. He will be transferred to Brazil's capital Brasilia to face extradition hearings.

WENDY JACKSON HALL, AN INTERNATIONAL ASIFA BOARD MEMBER FROM SEATTLE, HAS A NEW FILM OUT Her 6 minute film *Salmon in the City* is a poem that contrasts the life cycle of Pacific NW salmon and the transition of their native environment to the modern urban landscape. The premiere featured Hall's new animated short and a video installation. www.salmoncity.net



Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water Produced by Gainax, released in 1990	Atlantis: The Lost Empire Produced by Disney, released in 2001
	

HOW ORIGINAL IS DISNEY'S "ATLANTIS"? FANS OF JAPANESE ANIMATION FIND IT DISTURBINGLY SIMILAR TO "NADIA" *Nadia, The Secret of Blue Water*, was released in 1990. Several web sites show with pictures and words how this earlier adventure to Atlantis is almost identical to Disney's recent product in dozens of ways (plot, design of the characters, type of spaces they go through, etc.). M. Hayden at www.silverhammer.org/Atlantis was the first site. www.zero-city.com/nadia/nadia_vs_atlantis.html and www.oldcrows.net/Atlantis reprinted Hayden's information. Then dozens of newspapers, columnists, web reporters, etc. picked up the story. Although you may not hear about this from the media giants, it is still possible to get the word out to some extent.

DUBIOUS NEW BETTY BOOP PROJECT ANNOUNCED

The original Betty was a delightful star in her best films, but revivals, with the exception of a fine show by Colossal, have been dismal affairs. The latest Boop news is Mainframe in Vancouver is planning a computer generated 3D series. They claim they "will respect the integrity of the original property while moving Betty into a new and modern age." Richard Fleischer said, "I am very excited about the new series, which will capture the cutting edge humor of the alluring Betty Boop in an adventurous and music driven setting...She'll Boop-oop-a-doop her way into the 21st century."

MEANWHILE DMA ANIMATION IS CREATING BETTY BOOP SLOT MACHINES The project was directed by Tony Caio and Bryan Cox. "We worked very closely with King Features to make sure Betty looked beautiful," said Caio. "King Features Syndicate has very high standards for its licensed properties." Any bets that it will respect the integrity of the original property? I suspect King will let anybody use Betty for a buck, but I might be wrong.

ACADEMY AWARD WINNING ANIMATOR LEE MISHKIN PASSES AWAY Veteran animator and instructor Lee Mishkin, who won an Academy Award for Best Animated Short for his 1970 film *Is It Always Right To Be Right?*, passed away on June 19, 2001. He was 74. Mishkin suffered heart failure and died in his sleep with his family at his side. He had formally retired just six weeks ago, moving to a care facility in Seattle after having spent the last seven years in Vancouver, where he developed the classical animation curriculum and taught at VanArts.

Mishkin began his career in 1949, working on Jay Ward's *Crusader Rabbit*, the first animated series created specifically for television. Through the '50s and '60s he worked on theatrical series such as *Casper the Friendly Ghost* and *Popeye*. He also worked on *Mister Magoo's Christmas Carol* for TV, and the combination live-action/animated Don Knotts comedy feature, *The Incredible Mr. Limpett*. Besides winning

an Oscar, Lee received the British Grierson Award for directing *Butterfly Ball*, an animated rock video. He also received two Emmy nominations for co-writing and directing *Faeries*, a CBS television special. His most famous television credit is the animated introduction to the cult-favorite *Batman* series starring Adam West.

AARDMAN LAYS OFF 90 Aardman has halted work on *Tortoise vs. Hare*, but plans to start up the production again in about six months when their script problems are worked out. As a result 90 out of their 172 staff members are out of work.

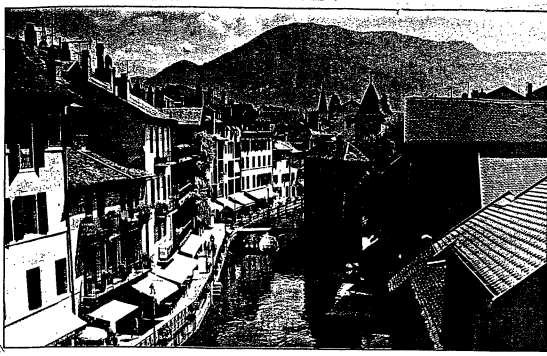
"The characters have got to be fleshed out," Aardman spokesman Arthur Sheriff said. "One of the biggest criticisms of British films is that they tend to be underdeveloped, so we wanted to fix that." The studio's first feature was *Chicken Run*.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ANIMATION HISTORY READ GENE DEITCH'S NEW BOOK ON THE INTERNET AT AWN His book *How to succeed in animation, don't let a little thing like failure bother you*, is great reading. I recently contacted him by e-mail about his being with UPA in their formative years. Part of his reply was, "we constantly were pained by the label 'limited animation,' which grossly missed the point of what we were doing. UPA was a collection of extremely talented visionaries, who were trying to look at things in a new way. That is essentially what John Hubley taught me. He was able to see with the hidden camera in his brain what no one else even thought of. Hub taught me to see, and Bill Hurtz taught me to do."

CHRONICLE FILM CRITIC WROTE AN ARTICLE "WILL DIGITAL ACTORS DISPLACE HUMAN ONES? OLD-STYLE CARTOONS ARE THE MORE LIKELY CASUALTIES" (Sunday *Datebook*, July 22) Wesley Morris didn't really say much and he avoided saying anything negative about *Final Fantasy*. While *Fantasy* is an impressive technical tour-de-force, the characters can't act very well (express emotions, etc.), don't look real most of the time that they are standing still and the script is about as engrossing as reading the *Yellow Pages*.

Gene Hamm wrote Wesley the following letter about his assumptions about 2D animation. "Dear Wesley, No matter how realistic 3D computer animation gets, it won't replace old fashioned 2D cartoons. Marshal McLuhan theorized that when a new medium appears, the old medium redefines itself. The 2D cartoons just have to concentrate on flat designs that can't possibly be replicated in 3D. The charm of UPA cartoons were the Picasso-Miro-Matisse-like designs that couldn't possibly move around in space, but by God, they were doing it anyway. That kind of impossible movement is the charm at the heart of cartoons. The old cartoons don't need to be turned into 3D. The Rocky and Bullwinkle movie lost the charm and simplicity of the original. *Space Jam* was an atrocity against Bugs Bunny and his pals.

If you look around, while movie animation is getting more 3D, Flash is allowing animation on the Internet to rediscover the charm and simplicity of cartoons again. Just look at the Spumco website or *Thugs on Film*. The pendulum always swings back and forth. The evolution of ideas follows Hegel's dictum of "Thesis-antithesis-synthesis." Gene Hamm, Animation Instructor, Academy of Art College"



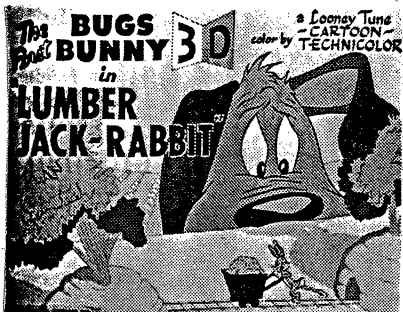
ANNECY 2001

a report by Tsvika Oren, Tel Aviv, Israel

Contrary to some past Annecy experiences, the 35th Annecy International Animation Festival, June 4th to 9th, 2001, was so friendly and well organized it could serve as an antidote to any past negative experiences there. There were over 5000 guests, yet, it did not feel crowded. There were scarcely any long lines for tickets or to enter a screening. Only a couple of 'sorry-no-more-tickets' programs. There were a total of 55 programs shown on 8 screens. Since each shorts competition program was screened 7 times, each feature was shown 6 times and each out-of-competition show was shown 3 times. etc. there were 160 screenings presented. Socially, there were far fewer "by-invitation-only events" than in previous festivals. Those events usually have a high "pissing-off effect." Either you or some of your friends get the feeling of not being quite wanted.

This year the festival's excellent web-site made it possible for you to plan your visit in advance so you would not miss any rare jewels. Such a jewel was the single screening of a new, complete copy (101 min.) of *The Lost World* (1925) by Harry O. Hoyt and the legendary Willis H. O'Brien. Annecy's artistic director, French TV star Serge Bromberg, together with film restorer David Shepard, have put this version together using 8 different raped copies (positives and negatives of European and American versions of the film). Shepard also restored, as much as was possible, the film's tinting according to the original script. A new orchestral score, somewhat loud and over-dramatic, was attached to the film. It was exciting to see, at long last, the partly lost *Lost World* and to enjoy its innocence, sets, matte paintings, Delgado's creatures and O'Brien's animation. It gave us some insight as to what led to the timeless qualities of *King Kong*.

Another jewel was the master-class given by Michael Dudok de Wit. A rare opportunity to see, with your very own eyes, how this brilliant artist gets his palms dirty with charcoal when he smears dirt on paper to make clouds which seem to be made of wet air (for *Father and Daughter*). Or to hear him analyze how paths of action in *The Monk and the Fish* echo shapes in the background.



Another rare opportunity was the screening of 3-D films. The program of that complex, expensive technique of the 50's included Disney's *Working for Peanuts*, 1953 with Donald Duck (Jack Hannah); Lantz's *Hypnotic Hick*, 1953 with Woody Woodpecker (Don Patterson); Warner Bros.' *Lumber Jack Rabbit*, 1953 with Bugs Bunny (Chuck Jones); Hi Hirsh's

Come Closer, 1952, John A. Norling's *Motor Rhythm*, 1953 (it used 3-D footage shown at the 1939 World's Fair showing a car being constructed); John Lasseter's *Knickknack*, 1989 (Pixar) and the feature *Starchaser: The Legend of Orin* 1985 (Steve Hahn, Korea/USA). They also showed 3-D films by Norman McLaren and Oscar Fischinger.

The 12th century castle, rising above the old city (located in the French Alps), hosted a wonderful Aardman exhibition. They displayed models, story-boards, sketches, chicken parts, Gromit parts, etc. and there was an ongoing screening of the studio's films and commercials. Hopefully, it will go on a world tour. (An excellent Raoul Servais exhibition, organized for Annecy '99, is still touring.)

There was an impressive salute to British animation consisting of 12 programs. The show included commercials, personal films and commissioned works. There was an homage to the late Alison de Vere, a wonderful poet of animation who died last year.

Jayne Pilling, Curator of most of the UK programs, also presented at the festival her new, exciting book "*2D and Beyond*" sales@rotovision.com Other new books include John Lent's anthology *Animation in Asia and the Pacific* (johnlibbey@aol.com) and Giannalberto Bendazzi's exhaustive biography of Alexander Alexeieff, the pin-screen animator.

Annecy 2001 had plenty more excitement to offer. There were lots more programs, original artwork exhibitions, an ASIFA-International auction of artwork, and an ASIFA members' meeting. The MIFA market included master-classes, seminars, and displays of new software. There were companies, associations and schools represented from more than 50 countries.

There was so much to absorb that one had far too little time to spend with the many wonderful people attending the festival. I hear the all night "American Bar" party helped a bit for those who could do without sleep. They probably had a lot of Big nights. Other, more sleepy mortals, had to settle for the awards' ceremony and the closing party as the Big night.

The awards' ceremony's stage was designed as a Scottish pub. Serge Bromberg hosted it wearing a kilt. While he served beer and prizes, his kilt served as a challenge for some distinguished guests. Throughout the ceremony they tried to lift it up and get a peek at what it hides.

So, who won a prize? Out of 35 films from the U.S.A., totalling 882 min., Bill Plympton's *Mutant Aliens* was awarded the "best feature" prize, mainly for being a daringly different, non-mainstream, film and production. That's it. Which brings us to a major OOPS! Ralph Eggleston's *For the Birds* (Pixar, 2000) was certainly one of the best films in competition, yet it somehow slipped through the fingers of the juries. Once again this omission emphasizes the fact that prizes, more often than not, are but a limited acknowledgment of quality, reflecting juries' compromises rather than an authoritarian comment.

Another non-prize OOPS! For me was Phil Robinson's *Hubert's Brain*. Besides being a good movie it shone in its excellent use of tools-in-service-of-the-film among the films made by computers. Many cgi films are so concerned with "look what I can do with my computer" that they forget all about communicating, exciting, moving people other than programmers.

Michael DuDok de Wit's *Father and Daughter* was awarded the "best short film" prize (visit his excellent (www.dudokdewit.com web site). Cordell "Cat Came Back" Barker's latest *Strange Invaders* won a special distinction award.



The short films shown in competition from the U.S. were: *Bike Ride* (Tom Schroeder, 6'35"), *Storm and Ember* (Sharon Katz Jelden, 6'), *For the Birds* (Ralph Eggleston, 3'31"), *Fruits of Labor* (Rudy Poat, 1'44"), *Eat* (Bill Plympton, 9'), *Luz* (Spain/USA, Javier Martinez, 8'), *Mistaken Identity* (Maureen Selwood, 28') and *Hubert's Brain* (Phil Robinson, 15'34").

Mutant Aliens (Bill Plympton, 80') was shown in the feature category.

The panorama programs (new work shown, but not in competition) included from the U.S.: *Thought Bubble* (Billy Greene, 4'), *Gravity* (Korea/USA, Min-hyung Lee, 5'), *Graveyard* (Michaela Pavlatova, 5'), *Rejected* (Don Hertzfeldt, 9'30"), *Edwurd Fudwupper Fibbed Big* (Berkeley Breathed, 8'41") and *Mirror* (Lee Lanier, 2'50").

The commissioned TV films in competition were: *Spy Groove* "Greek Freaks" (E. M. Bour/S. A. Blinkoff, 21'30"), *Avenue Amy* "The Anti-Indie" (Joan Raspo, 5'), *Blue's Clues* "Periwinkle Misses his Friends" (David Levy, 24'30"), *Little Bill* (Robert Scull, 11'45"), *Zoey's Zoo* "Lots of Ocelots" (Yvette Kaplan, 7'), *Gift of the Little People* (Michael Bannon, 22'), *Lewis Lectures* (Merrill Markoe/Lisa Gillim, 7'28") and *Daria* "Is It Fall Yet?" (Karen Disher/Guy Moore, 72').

The commercials from the U.S. in competition were by Ken Lidster, Peter Chung, Mike Wellins, Carl Willat, J. J. Sedelmaier (3), Bill White, Chel White, Robert Valley and Joanna Quinn (2 for ACME). In addition a Bob Kurtz (L.A. Kurtz & Friends) showreel of outstanding commercials from the 70's on, was included in the international selection of commercials.

The student films from the U.S. in competition were: *Bibbily Bobbily Job* (Valerie Perkins, Rochester Inst. of Tech, 4'20"), *Eat Your Brain* (Abigail Goldsmith, CalArts, 3'53"), *Dream* (Ah-young Jung, CalArts, 3'06"), *Lint People* (Helder Sun, CalArts, 7'41"), *Vessel Wrestling* (Lisa Yu, UCLA, 13'), *Fur & Feathers* (Maria Vasilkovsky, CalArts, 5'30"), *Good Guys Wear Black* (Aaron Alexovich, CalArts, 4'07") and *Wicked* (Linda Dorn, CalArts, 2'39").

A variety of historic American rabbits were shown in 2 "Rabbitmation" programs. They included Chuck Jones' *Presto Change O* (1939) and *Rabbit Fire* (1951); Tex Avery's *A Wild Hare* (1940) and *Doggone Tired* (1949); Fleischer's *Bunny Mooning* (1937); 3 Roger Rabbit shorts (Rob Minkoff, 1989,'90,'93); Chris Wedge's *Bunny* ('98); Don Hertzfeldt's *Genre* ('96); O.J. San Felipe's *Yoffe the Wonder Dog vs. the Evil Bunny Slippers* (2000); Vinton's Easter special *The Art of Freeway Crossing*; Eric Porter's *Rabbit Stew* (U.S/Australia, 1950) and Disney's Oswald in *Ocean Up* (1927).

Other programs of work by Americans included retrospective programs of work by Bill Hanna and Claire Parker/Alexander Alexeieff. They also showed *The Lost World*, 1925; a UNICEF compilation, work from past ASIFA children's workshops, Spike & Mike's Sick & Twisted Festival

and outdoor screenings of Disney's *Peter Pan* and Odyssey's *Cybernight*.

At the gala closing night ceremony they ran Tex Avery's *Porky's Preview*. The event also included zany on-stage antics by John Dilworth (Courage the Cowardly Dog) when he presented Bill Plympton his award.

Note: Annecy is a beautiful historic town. Archaeologists have found in the area remains of lakeside villages that date from the Neolithic period, about 4000 BC. The oldest parts of the city, built in the 9th century, are now covered by the lake. The "new" Annecy was begun in the 11th century.

(Jerry Beck says the 3D event, staged by Annecy master of ceremonies Serge Bromberg, was "one of the greatest retrospective events I'd ever seen.")

ILM'S TOUR DE FORCE

by Karl Cohen

Due to space limitations the following paragraphs were cut by *Film/Tape World* from my recent (July) article on ILM: "Before the visit to ILM ended there was a screening of individual shots from *Pearl Harbor* that further demonstrated their exceptional skills at photo-realistic computer generated imagery. After the screening we were introduced to John Helms, the technical director who animated the memorable "bomb drop sequence" that shows a Japanese bomb leaving an aircraft and, as the camera tips downward and follows behind the bomb, we see it falling toward the battleship Arizona. You may have seen this sequence in TV commercials or in other publicity for the film.

Helms explained that the shot was a composite of some 140 different computer generated elements. It begins with a group of aircraft flying towards the camera. There are about 350 Japanese aircraft in the film, but only a handful of authentic planes actually exist now. The dozens of aircraft in this sequence were computer generated. The environment that they fly through began as a series of photos that were patched together and modified in the computer. The bomb was another separate element (complete with a tiny spinning propeller), as were clouds of black smoke from explosions, shadows of planes, reflections, flying tracer bullets, a torpedo heading towards the battleship through the water and the movements of computer generated ocean swells and waves.

When Ed Hirsh, co-visual effects supervisor, filmed the reference footage of Pearl Harbor that was used to design the shot, there were no ships in the water. The entire fleet seen in the shot was computer generated. Artists also had to remove cars, parking lots and buildings that didn't exist when Pearl Harbor was attacked.

The thousands of people moving about on the Arizona's deck are not real. They began as dots placed on the deck by Huck Wirtz, lead animator. The computer turns them into people seen from above and uses "predetermined animation" to make them move about.

To add further realism to the scene, camera shake was added to create the illusion of realism. ILM studied footage shot by skydivers to see how the falling cameraman and the skydivers he was filming jiggled as they fell. The end result is a truly amazing sequence.

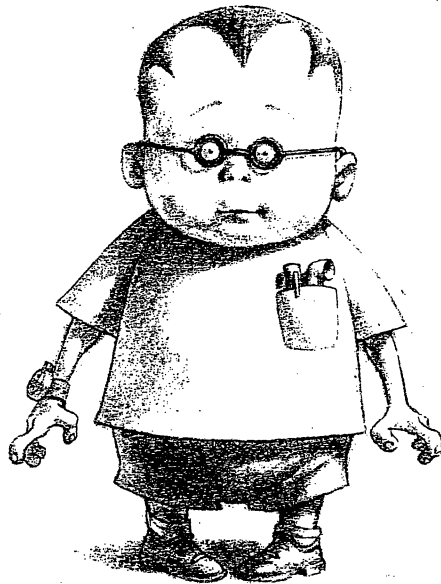
When Helms was asked what it was like to do this shot, he said doing it "was a lot of fun." He thought it would get lots of comments, but he didn't expect it to become world famous."

NEW BOOK

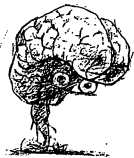
"PRODUCING ANIMATION" IS BEING OFFERED TO ASIFA MEMBERS AT A DISCOUNT *Producing Animation* by Catherine Winder and Zahra Dowlatabadi is a guide to identifying, pitching, selling, developing, and producing an animated show. It provides comprehensive information on production, planning, budgeting, scheduling, and tracking your project. It includes a detailed description and flow charts of the production process for traditional 2D and 3D CGI.

continued on last page

ASIFA-SF PRESENTS A
SNEAK PREVIEW OF
HUBERT'S BRAIN



the new 17 minute CG film in 35mm from Wild Brain
director Phil Robinson and producer Nina Rappaport in-person



Saturday, September 15, 11:15 AM

At the Red Vic on Haight Street, free, public invited

With animated independent shorts shown in 35mm:

- NINA PALEY'S *FETCH* and *PANDORAMA*
- DAN McHALE'S *SEX PUDDING*
- SCOTT KRAVITZ'S *THE MAGIC TRICK*
- JEREMY SOLTERBECK'S *MOVING ILLUSTRATIONS OF MACHINES*



and (if the sound track is finished) a clay animated short by JEROLD HOWARD!



plus classic 1930's theatrical cartoons in 35mm, probably a
Betty Boop, Porky Pig and a Fleischer bouncing ball cartoon.

Don't miss seeing Wild Brain's latest work on a big screen!!!

Producing Animation was written from the perspective of a producer and it presents the nuts-and-bolts of how a project is created in addition to describing the role of the producer at each phase. Answers are provided to many of the commonly asked questions about animation, ranging from how to enter the business to the average cost and schedule for a prime-time animated series. There are observations from a wide range of industry professionals including studio heads, creators, directors, producers, writers and members of the production crew. The book gives the reader insight into what it takes to be a successful producer in this business. The authors' personal anecdotes at key process points relay firsthand experience, illustrating some of the pitfalls a producer must learn to circumvent. Detailed information on preparing a thorough production plan including budget, schedule, and crew plan, can also be found in the book.

The book retails for \$34.95. ASIFA members pay \$29.70 and get free shipping if the order now. To order www.focalpress.com 1-800-366-2665 email orders@bhusa.com or Focal Press, 225 Wildwood Ave., Woburn, Mass. 01801 For more information www.producinganimation.com

ANIMATOR IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

FOLIMAGE IN VALENCE, FRANCE WELCOMES TWO ANIMATORS A YEAR to live and work at their studio for up to 8 months. The project must be personal, not part of a series and under 6 minutes long. The 13 works completed under this program include Michael Dudok de Wit's Oscar nominated *The Monk and the Fish* and *At the End of the Earth* by Konstantin Bronzit. You must be able to speak English or French. October 15 deadline. ASIFA-SF members can contact Karl Cohen for their prospectus or write Folimage, 6 allée Jean Bertin 26000 Valence, France folimage@wanadoo.fr

CONFERENCES

WEB2001 AT THE MOSCONE CENTER IN SF, Sept. 4-8, courses, trade show, etc. www.web2001show.com

SEYBOLD-SF, Sept. 24-28, Moscone Center, (888) 886-8895, www.seyboldseminars.com

ASIFA-SANFRANCISCO
P.O. BOX 14516
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114

6502002 Local
John Peterson
12 Bishop Lane
Menlo Park, CA 94025

This issue was written by Karl Cohen, Tsvika Oren, Barry Purves and Gene Hamm. Pete Davis was the proofreader. Shirley Smith was production manager. The mailing crew included Smith, Cohen, Ron Seawright and Tara Packard. Philip Malkin keeps the membership/subscription files organized.

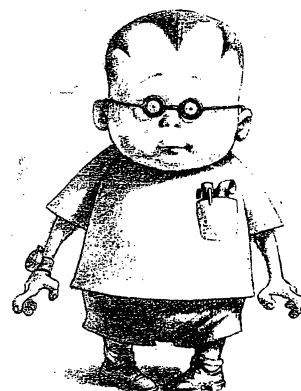
FESTIVALS

WHY SHOULD YOU ENTER FESTIVALS by Karl Cohen I just got an e-mail announcing a film festival run through a public access TV station in Virginia. The entry fee is \$35. They claim 900,000 potential viewers and winners will be shown on their web site. Sounds good unless you realize that very few people actually log onto their web site or watch public access stations since very few people know what is being shown on them in advance. Most stations do not have advertising and promotion budgets. So who will be watching?

Spend your entry fee budget wisely. Enter festivals where the benefits to you are worth the cost of the entry fee. Are the judges people who might help your career later? Will any people whom you believe will help your career be in the audience? Will a win get you publicity? Will winning qualify you for consideration for an Oscar nomination? Are there cash prizes? You probably spent a lot making your work, so why spend a lot more on entry fees to be part of events that will be of little or no value to you.

SF FILM FESTIVAL'S GOLDEN GATE AWARDS Entry deadline November 30 Has an animation category. Also has a new visions and a Bay Area category. They attracted nearly 1,600 entries from 58 countries last year. They have 27 categories. There is a lot of competition for the single cash prize in animation. They generally show several animated entries. The animation judges often pass on films that later get nominated for Oscars so it is hard to say what they will like. Entry forms and eligibility guidelines are available after September 1 from the Festival Web site www.sffs.org or call (415) 561-5014. Email ggawards@sffs.org or write Programming Department, SF International Film Festival, 39 Mesa Street, Suite 110, The Presidio, SF CA 94129.

LATE NEWS ITEM - PIXAR'S ALEX ORELLE IS GUEST OF A NEW FESTIVAL IN TEL AVIV The first Co-CarAn Festival (Comic Caricature Animation) is Aug. 26-28. He was set to present his work on opening night. Jayne Pittling (British Animation Awards) and Norm Macdonald (TVC) were also honored guests. Cartoon Network and British Council helped support the event.





AWARD WINNING STOP-MOTION ANIMATOR BILLY GREENE MURDERED SEPTEMBER 10

He was 33 and had just moved back to the Bay Area from Portland where he had been working at Will Vinton's studio. He was coming home from the movies when he was shot outside of his new apartment in the 4300 block of Adeline in Emeryville. Police say there was evidence that the killer tried to remove his wallet, but had fled without it or its contents. His body was found just after midnight in a pool of blood according to the *Oakland Tribune*. No suspects were seen and no arrests have been made.

Hamilton Billy Green was "just one of the sweetest, kindest people that anybody knew" said his father, San Francisco photographer and poet, Tinker Green. "He was a funny person who was always thinking of other people." A close friend told the reporter that Greene's artistic abilities reflected his "childlike innocence, subtle humor and off-handed modesty." A friend of his told me that Billy was the type of person who would have given the robber his wallet rather than risk his life for a few bucks. "The killing was totally senseless."

We recently showed his new film, *Thought Bubble*, in a program of the winners of the Annual ASIFA-East 2001 Competition. Our audience voted this sensitive film about a down-and-out street person an honorable mention. It had premiered at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival and went on to be screened at several major festivals in Brazil, Korea, at France's Annecy and by the New York Film Festival. His earlier short *Malfunction* was shown on opening night of the 1998 Film Arts Festival and went on to be show at Slamdance.

His commercial career includes stints at 181 Productions in New York, Clayart Trickfilm Studio in Frankfurt, Germany and Will Vinton Studio in Portland where he worked on the *PJs*. He returned to the Bay Area 5 weeks before his death to work on *Phantom Investigators*, a stop-motion series being produced at the Custer Street Stage in San Francisco by Josephine Huang and her husband Stephen. (Tim Hittle and Anthony Scott are two of the

directors on this series being created by Wholesome Products for Warner Bros. TV.)

Billy was a passionate and dedicated percussionist. He had been a drummer with Poltroon, a San Francisco band. For the past few years he performed with Portland's Brazilian samba marching band Lions of Batucada. He participated in Carnival 2000 in Rio de Janeiro.

A memorial for Billy was held on Sunday, Sept. 16 at the Mission Cultural Center. Over 250 people attend the event. Lions of Batucada came from Portland to play and there was a screening of some of his films (his first films were made when he was 5 or 6). Later that night some of his friends held a bonfire at Ocean Beach in his honor.

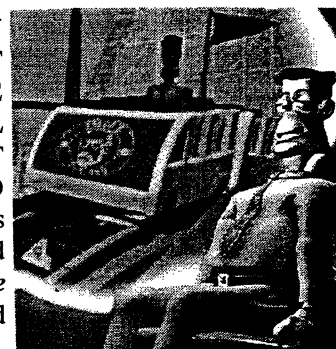
He is survived by his mother Robin Davey of Waterbury, Vermont and his father Tinker Greene of San Francisco. He was an only child. His ashes will be scattered in a private ceremony. Donations in his honor can be made to Greenpeace, 902 H Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20001 or to The Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence at 1225 Eye Street, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20005.

Friends of Billy Greene have establish a handsome web site at www.blackvan.net Anyone with information about the shooting should call the Emeryville Police (510) 596-3774.

A SHORT TRIBUTE TO BILLY GREENE WILL BE PRESENTED AT OUR OCTOBER 17 EVENT. WE WILL SCREEN "THOUGHT BUBBLE" AND SOME OF HIS EARLIER WORKS - Exploratorium, 7:30 pm.

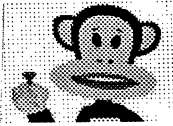
JOHN ATKINSON'S NEW FILM SHOWN AT SIGGRAPH AND AT THE CRESTED BUTTE REEL FESTIVAL WHERE IT WON A SILVER AWARD

Last year his short *Aspire* was shown at several festivals and won a few awards. Now, *The Daydreamer* is finished and has already won a silver award for best animated film at the Crested Butte Reel Festival. It is being included in a package of winners from that festival at iFilm on the Internet.



The 5 minute short, made using Hash 3D Software, was show at SIGGRAPH 2001 by Hash Inc. One person said the short was "one of the most innovative demonstrations of the maverick product's filmmaking capabilities to date." Atkinson says his film "tells the story of an overworked, underpaid office worker who battles some extremely insistent daydreams while trying to meet a tight deadline." www.atkinsonproductions.com

FOR USEFUL INFORMATION WWW.ASIFA-SF.ORG



MONDO MEDIA BRINGS TO LIFE "JULIUS AND FRIENDS" BY PAUL FRANK

Mondo Media has launched its newest Mondo Mini Show, *Julius & Friends*. The show can be viewed exclusively on Sony's just-launched broadband creativity platform, **Screenblast.com**. Jason Schwartzman (Rushmore) is the voice of Julius, the monkey with the wide smile. A new episode will appear every two weeks, chronicling the characters' escapades in Planned Pines, USA, the first planned community for cartoon characters.

In addition to viewing the episodes, visitors to the site will find other ways to interact with the show's characters. Mix Monkey, a browser-based animated set of turntables and sound effects, will allow fans to spin and scratch with the show's characters and giving viewers an opportunity to play DJ by inserting sampled dialogue and sounds from the current episode. Additionally, the "Meet the Cast" feature provides interactive character descriptions presented in the style of the show.

"Everyone has been waiting to see how the Internet can truly be successful in terms of entertainment," said Jan Mallis, an executive producer at Mondo Media. "The Screenblast service allows users an entirely new interaction with content -- its creative approach encourages audiences to participate and be active viewers."

PDI/DREAMWORKS HAS ANNOUNCED A FEW DETAILS ABOUT THEIR NEXT PROJECTS They include *Tuskier*, a feature starring a herd of elephants, *Shrek 2*, and *Madagascar*, a feature about zoo animals who are returned to the wild by well meaning animal rights activists. They had been working on a conversion of *Shrek* to 70mm that was scheduled for release before Christmas, but recent publicity hasn't mentioned that project.

The only information I've seen in print about *Shrek 2* is that it will reunite the voice cast of Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy and Cameron Diaz. Hopefully it will have the same writers.

Jeffrey Katzenberg recently told *USA TODAY* that *Tuskier*, an action-adventure story set in Southeast Asia, "is very much an homage to the classic World War II films such as *The Dirty Dozen* or *The Guns of Navarone*, in which a band of screw-ups have to go on an impossible mission in order to save the rest of the herd." Morgan Freeman, Jodie Foster, Gary Shandling and Dana Carvey are doing voices for the production.

Madagascar is an adventure with a lion, zebra, giraffe and hippo who are rescued from a NY zoo. They are on a ship when it capsizes and the quartet ends up on the island of Madagascar.

SHREK RECEIVES THE MOST ANNIE NOMINATIONS FOR A FEATURE AND WILD BRAIN GETS 8 NOMINATIONS For the 29th Annual Annie Awards *Shrek* was nominated for best picture and 11 other awards. Other films nominated for best feature are *Blood: The Last Vampire*, *Osmosis Jones*, and *The Emperor's New Groove*. Disney's *Atlantis* was left out, but it did get nominations in 6 other categories. *Blood: The Last Vampire* received its only nomination in the best feature category. *The*

Emperor's New Groove was nominated in 11 categories and *Osmosis Jones* was nominated in 6.

Shrek was nominated for best picture, direction, special effects, storyboards, writing, male voice actor, music, production design (2 nominations) and individual character animation (3 nominations - for Raman Hui, Paul Chung and Jason Reisege).

WILD BRAIN received 3 of the 5 nominations for best Internet production. Their works competing against each other in this category are *Grove Monkee*, *Graveyard* and *Mantelope*. *Hubert's Brain* was nominated for outstanding animated short, *Poochini: Coffee Dog* was nominated for best daytime animation TV production, their opening/closing for the *Chuck Jones Show* was nominated in the special projects category and 2 Wrigley's Winterfresh chewing gum ads, "Beat Box" and "Urban Hip Hopper" are competing for the best TV commercial award.

This year's Annie Awards ceremony will be held on Saturday, November 10, 2001 at the Alex Theater in Glendale, California. For ticket information call (818) 842-8330. A full list of nominations is available at www.asifa-hollywood.org.

"SHREK" DVD GOES ON SALE NOVEMBER 2 DVD collectors will be getting a lot of extras in the 2 disc set - goofs, interviews, a storyboard pitch, technical details, behind the scenes material, a reel of character design progression and much more. It retails at \$26.99. Amazon.com is selling it in advance for \$19.95.

WESTERN IMAGES CREATES A SPOT FOR CINGULAR Western's CGI spot for Cingular Wireless is called "Balloon Art." It opens with an expanding blue toy balloon and the sound of stretching rubber. It ends with a likeness of George Washington crossing the Delaware made out of computer generated balloons. The spot was directed by Mark Dippé, of Pandemonium and was animated using Alias-Wavefront Maya.

SPAZZCO PRODUCES EDEN'S CRUSH ANIMATED MUSIC VIDEO FOR THE WEB Spazzco Animation in S.F. has produced the video "Love This Way" by the pop female group Eden's Crush. Using a futuristic anime style, it depicts the group as interplanetary travelers who touch down on an angry planet. They use positive messages to transform the barren landscape into a lush paradise. The video is being run exclusively by cartoonnetwork.com as part of the site's *Web Premiere Toons* program. Spazzco is producing a series of animated music videos for Cartoon Network.com

WELCOME FENIX GRAPH X They are a new creative studio specializing in digital animation and video production. Their talented team is "innovative, energetic, and dedicated to delivering razor-sharp results." They can do anything from a quick edit or a digital ink and paint job to a fully produced video with animation. They have ToonBoom software to do post-production ink/paint & compositing and can do 2D digital animation. They do web promotions, DVD authoring, and package design. You can check out their work at: www.fenixgraphix.com Fenix Graph X, 55 Stevenson, 4th Floor, San Francisco, Ca 94105 (415) 904-6290

WILD BRAIN HIRES AWARD-WINNING DIRECTOR

DENIS MORELLA Denis Morella's unique style of offbeat humor is evident in a series of recently completed shorts at Wild Brain for cartoonnetwork.com. He directed Uncle Squirrel in *Squirrel Interrupted* and Yogi Bear in *Lullabye Bye Bear*, *A Meal of Two Cities* and *Hermann and Vermin*. He also contributed to Wild Brain's recent ad campaign for Wrigley's Winterfresh gum.

Prior to joining Wild Brain, Morella worked with Curious Pictures in San Francisco where he developed several pieces for the Cartoon Network. His *Animate Your World* won the "Best Animated Campaign" award at the World Animation Celebration. He also created and directed a 7-minute short *Prickles the Cactus*.

From 1985 to 1996, Morella worked with Colossal Pictures. He distinguished himself in the '80's as the creator of *Handicapped Pig Farm*, a sick and twisted personal film made before that genre existed. Morella graduated from The Philadelphia College of Art with a BFA in animation.

UNIVERSAL DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS (UDC)

GETS SPUNKY. UDC, a privately held digital marketing company, has acquired new media content creator and distributor Spunky Productions. Spunky will retain its brand name and identity and will continue operations in Atlanta, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Mansfield (Ohio) under their current management team. They run Spunkeytown and other sites with animation on the web.

PULSE SUFFERS LAYOFFS Pulse, a San Francisco-based 3D media solutions company, laid off an undisclosed number of staff members on Monday, September 17, 2001. The company sees the staff cuts as a positive move, allowing them a greater ability to reach profitability. The company plans to move toward e-learning, while continuing its current licenses. Pulse recently powered a 3D "virtual tour" for the Website of NBC's comedy *Will & Grace*. Pulse is known for bringing Jim Henson's Muppets to life on the Web.

WARNING: SPIKE & MIKE'S "SICK & TWISTED FESTIVAL OF ANIMATION" IS COMING TO THE BAY AREA

The guys who first brought you *Beavis and Butthead* and *South Park* are ready to unleash their new collection of disturbingly grotesque animated short films. They boast "Spike and Mike's® Sick and Twisted® Festival of Animation® is not for those with an overly refined artistic palate... an impressive batch of films selected to make your hot buttered popcorn come back up."

The "all new" show will premiere

18 shorts and repeat two "favorites" from past shows. Titles include *Behind the Music That Sucks-Britney Spears*, "a complete skewering of pop culture at its worst;" *Bad Phone Sex*, featuring comedian Chris Rock; *Love That Pussy* by DNA Productions, two primers on children's literature - *Harry Potter and the Magical Herb* and *Choke, Spot, Choke*; and Bill

Plympton's *Eat*. Another title in the show is described as "a love song to the ladies from Tenacious D." It is *F*#@ Her Gently* and it comes from John Kricfalusi's Spumco, Inc.



The two revivals are John Magnuson's *Thank You Mask Man* (with a great soundtrack by Lenny Bruce and animation directed by Jeff Hale) and *Hello, Dad, I'm in Jail* by Christopher Simon. Both are excellent works.

The world premieres of this show were at midnight, Sept. 14 at Laemmle's Monica 4-Plex in Santa Monica, their Playhouse 7 in Pasadena and at Landmark's Ken Cinema in San Diego. It opens on the outskirts of our area in Santa Cruz at the **Santa Cruz Cinema 9** for an October 12 - November 17 run (Fridays & Saturdays at 11:30 PM).

The program plays in San Francisco at the **Castro Theatre**, November 9-17; the **Roxie** November 19-29 and at **AMC's Van Ness Theatre** November 30 to December 22.

It comes to the **Crest** in Sacramento, CA, November 9-Dec 8 and the **Towne** in San Jose, November 30 - January 3.

JAZZ AND ABSTRACTION IN BEAT ERA FILMS, MANY MADE IN SAN FRANCISCO, TUESDAY OCTOBER 2 at the PFA in Berkeley, SATURDAY, OCT. 13 at the S.F. Art Institute, 7:30 both nights.

The program is *A Man and His Dog Out For Air* (Robert Breer, 1957, 3 mins). *Chasse de Touches* (Hy Hirsh, 1959, 4 mins). *Caravan* (Jordan Belson, 1952, 3.5 mins). *Eneri* (Hy Hirsh, 1953, 7 mins). *Things to Come* (Patricia Marx, 1953, 3 mins). *Autumn Spectrum* (Hy Hirsh, 1957, 7 mins). *Bridges-Go-Round* (Shirley Clarke, 1958, 3.5 mins). *Mood Contrasts* (Mary Ellen Bute, 1956, 7 mins). *Film No. 3* (Harry Smith, 1949, 3.5 mins). *Scratch Pad* (Hy Hirsh, 1961, 7 mins). *Catalog* (John Whitney, 1961, 7.5 mins). *Mandala* (Jordan Belson, 1953, 3 mins). *Yantra* (James Whitney, 1957, 8 mins). *Défense d'Afficher* (Hy Hirsh, 1958, 8 mins). *La Couleur de la Forme* (Hy Hirsh, 1961, 7 mins). (Total time: 82 mins, Color, 16mm, prints from The Iota Center)

PREMIERE OF A NEW WORK BY JORDAN BELSON. TUESDAY OCTOBER 9 AT THE PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE

The premiere of Jordan Belson's *Bardo* is with a program of short works at 7:30. *Bardo* is said to be full of "lush and subtle images" and is a journey through the Buddhist waiting-period between death and rebirth.

Experience "visual music" by a other contemporary independent animators. Ying Tan, who assisted Belson as editor on *Bardo*, is represented by two short works of her own, *Elements in Transformation #1* and *#2*. Other works range from Mar Elepano's hand-drawn-on-film impressions of Vivaldi's *Winter* to Al Jarnow's *Cubits*. Also included is *The Critic*, 1963 by Ernie Pintoff and the voice of Mel Brooks. The show consists of works on both film and video and is 81 minutes long.

PROGRAM: *Pencil Dance* (Chris Casady, 1988, 3 mins, B&W). *Orphics 6.1* (Ed Zajec, 1997, 3 mins). *Object Conversation* (Paul Glabicki, 1985, 10 mins). *Linear Dreams* (Richard Reeves, 1997, 7 mins). *Calculated Movements* (Larry Cuba, 1985, 6 mins, B&W). *IFSfilm* (Joost Rekveld, 1991, 3 mins, Silent, B&W). *Cubits* (Al Jarnow, 1978, 4 mins). *Winter* (Mar Elepano, 1984, 4 mins). *The Critic* (Ernie Pintoff, Mel Brooks, 1963, 5 mins). *ICRON* (Bob Snyder, 1978, 10 mins). *Elements in Transformation #1* and *#2* (Ying Tan, 1998, 3 mins). *Transfigured* (Stephen Arthur, 1998, 5.5 mins). *Luma Nocturna* (Sky David, 1974, 4 mins). *Bardo* (Jordan Belson, 2001, 13 mins).

DAMN! WTC/SEPT. 11 IMPACTS OUR UPCOMING EVENTS Just as this was going to press we received the following e-mail. "I am very sorry to have to tell you all that due to logistical problems arising from current events, we are going to have to postpone Richard's tour until next Spring. I apologize for the inconvenience this may cause you. We hope that you will still welcome Richard in March. I'll be in touch soon to attempt to reschedule the events." Richard Williams had planned to be here in Nov. for talks and book signings for us, Pixar and ILM.

At this point I do not know what we will do for our Nov. event. Any suggestions? **OUR DEC., JAN. AND FEB. EVENTS ARE ANIMATED CLASSICS AND OPEN SCREENINGS FOR INDEPENDENT ANIMATORS, STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS**

Our December event will be a screening of animated classics. The 16mm prints (no video) will come from two private archives. The show will be Wed. December 19. Although the theme hasn't been chosen yet, we will probably include some ultra rare Iwerks titles that have never been released on video.

All independent and student animators are invited to show their work at our annual open screening on Wednesday, January 16, 2002 (we can show ½" and ¾" video and 16mm films). Our annual open screening for professionals will be held on Wednesday, February 20. All of the above events will be at the Exploratorium.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION OFFERING 4 SHORT CGI CLASSES in After Effects, Commotion, digital Blue Screen and a workshop with Roy Miles. All are in late Oct. or early Nov. Call (415) 552-8760 for information.

LOCAL SCREENINGS

Tuesday, October 2, **KINETICA 3 SERIES: JAZZ AND ABSTRACTION IN THE BEAT ERA FILM** Newly preserved prints of rarely seen films by Hy Hirsh and other San Francisco film artists in the '50s. The program includes films by Hirsh, Jordan Belson, Harry Smith, Patricia Marx, John and James Whitney and Mary Ellen Bute. At the Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley. 7:30 PM.

Saturday Oct. 6, 11 am and Thurs. Oct. 11, 5 pm, Rafael, Mill Valley Film Festival, **PETTESON & FINDUS: THE CAT-O-NAUT** (2000, Sweden/Germany, for ages 4 and up). With **SPACE CASE**, Virginia Wilkos, 13 min.

Tuesday, October 9, **CONTEMPORARY VISUAL MUSIC** at 7:30 pm. Premiere of **BARDO** by Jordan Belson, plus work by Sky David, Joost Rekveld, Richard Reeves, Ying Tan, Paul Glabicki, Bob Snyder, Chris Casady and other contemporary artists. At the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley.

Wednesday, October 10, 5 pm and Saturday, Oct. 13, 1 pm, Rafael, Mill Valley Film Festival, **PROP AND BERTA**, Danish with English subtitles read aloud, ages 5 and up.

Friday, October 12, **KINETICA 3 SERIES: JAZZ AND ABSTRACTION IN THE BEAT ERA FILM** Rarely seen films by Hy Hirsh and other San Francisco artists in the '50s.

Show includes work by Hirsh, Belson, Harry Smith, Patricia Marx, John and James Whitney and Mary Ellen Bute. At the **ART INSTITUTE** in SF, 800 Chestnut, 7:30 PM.

Saturday, October 13, **CONTEMPORARY VISUAL MUSIC** at 7:30 pm. Premiere of **BARDO** by Jordan Belson, plus work by Sky David, Joost Rekveld, Richard Reeves, Ying Tan, Paul Glabicki, Bob Snyder, Chris Casady and other contemporary artists. At the Art Institute in SF..

Saturday, Oct. 13, 1 pm **CANADIAN BOUNTIES** animated films from the National Film Board at the Mill Valley Film Festival, Sequoia Theater. The selection will appeal to both adults and kids (*Bully Dance*, *Black Fly*, *The Dingles*, etc.)



Bully Dancer

Saturday, Oct. 13, 3 pm **ANIMATION: WHAT'S UP DOC?** a seminar at the Mill Valley Film Festival with Tom Bertino from ILM; Allison Abbate, producer of *Iron Giant*; Phil Robinson from Wild Brain and a speaker from PDI. At the Rafael.



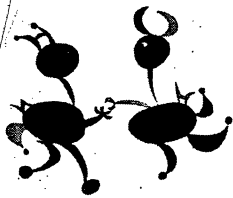
Saturday, Oct. 13, 5:45 pm and Sunday, Oct. 14 at 2:30 pm, **ANIMARATHON**, a 70 minute program at the Mill Valley Film Festival with Phil Robinson's *Hubert's Brain*, Tom Bertino's *Work in Progress*, Jonah Hall's *Metropopular*, Sean

McBride's *That Special Monkey*, Lee Lanier's *Millennium Bug*, Webster Colcord's *Extreme Man and Insane Boy*, Eric Levine's *Motion Capture*, Bob Deaver's *Bat City*, Suzanne Twining's *Terminator Tomatoes* and Gordon Langley's *Chicken*. Robinson, Bertino, Twining, Colcord, Lanier and Leven in-person. At the Rafael.

Wednesday, October 17, 7:30 PM, ASIFA-SF presents **A TRIBUTE TO BILLY GREENE** and ILM'S **"WORK IN PROGRESS."** Tom Bertino's *Work in Progress* is an experimental all digital 35mm short that was made at ILM to show-off new ideas and an unusual aesthetic approach for a company know for photo-realistic work. Bertino, a director with the company, has been working in secret for several years with a research and development team set up to explore an exciting new approach for ILM to render visuals. This is our first chance to see what they are up to. Bertino will talk about the challenges of making this work and may show behind-the-scenes footage. As a bonus we will show his first professional work. He did ink and paint on Sally Cruickshank's *Make Me Psychic*.

NATIONAL NEWS

VOICE ACTOR DAVE BARRY DIED August 16 at his Beverly Hills home. He was 82. Barry began his voice-over career at Warner Bros. in the 1940's. Among his performances were caricatures of Humphrey Bogart in *Becall to Arms*, 1946; *Slick Hare*, 1947 and *8 Ball Bunny*, 1950. In 1958, Barry took over as the voice of Elmer Fudd after the death of Arthur Q. Bryan. He also voiced Bluto in Popeye cartoons and worked on several Pink Panther shorts.



**"INDEPENDENT SPIRITS:
FAITH AND JOHN HUBLEY"
PREMIERES IN NEW YORK** The documentary focuses on John and Faith Hubley's struggle to produce independent work in a commercial world. It covers John's break with the

Disney literalism and linearity (he worked at Disney until the strike in 1941), his being blacklisted in the 1950's, his exploring the animation medium's potential to communicate serious ideas and to confront crucial social issues, John and Faith's use of innovative graphics and improvisational soundtracks, their pioneering use jazz (Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Carter, Quincy Jones, and other greats created soundtracks for them) and Faith's commitment to produce at least one independent short a year since her husband's death in 1977.

The documentary was directed by Sybil DelGaudio and produced by Patty Wineapple. They began work on the project in the mid-90's after completing the outstanding 4-part TV series *Animated Women* (produced by ITVS for public television). A half-hour episode of that series was on the work of Faith Hubley.

ASIFA-East and NY Women in Film sponsored the premiere on Sept. 25 at the Proshansky Auditorium of CUNY Graduate Center (Fifth Ave. at 34th St.). Faith Hubley and Sybil DelGaudio were scheduled to speak at the event.

NEW VIDEOTAPES AVAILABLE FROM THE IOTA CENTER A new edition of *The Films of Oskar Fischinger, Volume 1* has been released as part of Iota's Kinetica Video Library. This edition includes new versions of *Allegretto* and *Motion Painting No. 1* transferred from recently-restored prints. Also appearing in the store are tapes of work by Len Lye, Jordan Belson, Stan Brakhage (hand-painted films), Norman McLaren, Glen McCay, Bill Alves, Hans Richter, John Whitney and Stan Vanderbeek. They also sell books and exhibition catalogs.

The IotaCenter is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, promoting and celebrating the art of abstraction in the moving image in all its many forms and under all its various names. The IotaCenter's Research Library in Los Angeles houses one of the world's largest collection of materials devoted to abstraction in film, video, performance, installation and computer-animated art. For more information: www.iotacenter.org

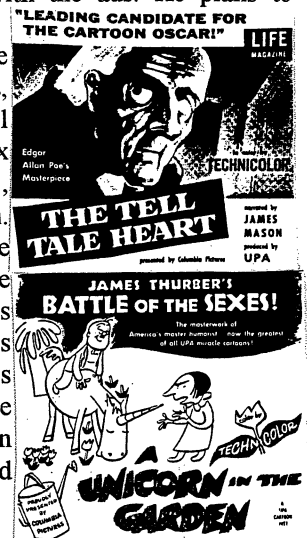
"NADIA: THE SECRET OF BLUE WATER" (1990), THE FILM THAT SEEMS TO HAVE "INFLUENCED" DISNEY'S "ATLANTIS," IS AVAILABLE ON VIDEO AND DVD distributed by A.D. Vision Films. It was an extremely popular 39 episode prime-time TV show in Japan and a theatrical sequel, *Nadia, The Secret of Fuzzy* was made. In the US dubbed copies of the first 8 episodes were available on tape in the early '90's. Serious fans obtained bootleg copies of other episodes in Japanese. Last month's newsletter covered why fans of *Nadia* are disappointed that Disney didn't acknowledge that their *Atlantis* was quite similar to the earlier film in many ways.



ANIMATION BLAST #7 is a very visual issue highlighting rare artwork rather than long interviews and reviews. The editor states "I'd be willing to wager (it) is the finest assemblage of artistic talent to ever appear in any issue on an animation magazine." While you may not like every image, it is an impressive selection. The talented artists are: Genny Tartakovsky who created *Samuri Jack*, Michel Gagne who did conceptual design

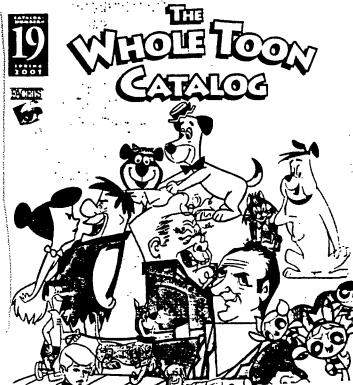
work on *Osmosis Jones*, Floyd Norman (gag drawings) who did story work on *Jungle Book*, *Mulan*, *Toy Story 2*, *Monsters*, etc., Chuck Jones (covers for a 1950's square dance magazine - some with Bugs Bunny), Mark Kausler who has been working on *It's The Cat* when he isn't busy working on films like *Osmosis Jones* and *Lion King*, and Ray Aragon. There are "dream dolls" images by Ed Bell, Craig McCracken, John Mahoney, Leonard Robinson, Shane Glines and Mr. Lawrence. There is also a silly article with lots of photos of Ward Kimball on Groucho's *You Bet Your Life*, 1954 and a fascinating collection of 11 newspaper ads for animated shorts and features (*Alice in Wonderland*, *Tell Tale Heart*, *Unicorn in the Garden*, *Gay Purr-ee*, *Johnny The Giant Killer*, *The Yellow Submarine*, etc.) Jerry Beck wrote an informative introduction to go with the ads. He plans to publish a book of them next year.

The issue should be available from Tower Records, Comic Relief in Berkeley, by mail from Animation Blast, PO Box 260491, Encino, CA 91426-0491, and through AnimationBlast.com. Also Bud Plant's Incredible Catalog is now carrying the magazine. This issue has 16 pages of full-color and the print run is 7500, so the publication is expanding quickly. It has wide appeal and support from artists in the industry, historians and cartoons buffs.



SOME ENTERTAINMENT STOCKS AT RECORD LOWS IMAX will probably be "de-listed" from the stock exchange soon as this once valuable stock was selling around 56 cents a share in late Sept. A year ago a share sold for \$25. (Iwerks is a great company, but was dropped from the NY stock exchange this year when shares continued to sell for under \$1 for longer than the specified length of time). Disney had a high of \$41.94 earlier this year. The day this was written in Sept. shares were \$17.10. (Disney is the nation's 2nd largest entertainment corporation.)

On the other hand, Pixar has been doing OK in this period of downward moving stocks. Their 52 wk. high was \$46 and their low was \$26. The stock is now around \$33 a share.

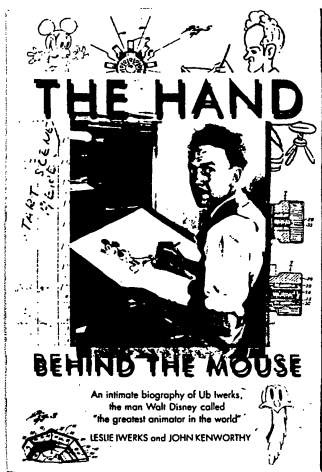


LOOKING FOR GREAT HOLIDAY GIFTS OF ANIMATION BOOKS, DVDS AND TAPES? CHECK OUT THE NEW WHOLE TOON CATALOG (#19) The 9 new books being offered in this issue range from Ed Hooks' *Acting For Animators* to *My Life as a Ten Year Old Boy* by Nancy Cartwright, the voice of Bart Simpson. There are over 80 other animation books available from them.

Their enormous video and DVD library includes lots of rare items including Lotte Reiniger's *Adventures of Prince Achmed* (1924, the oldest existing animated feature), *The Animation Celebration* (they bought up the last copies of this out of print series and sell them at list prices), *Attack of the Cohl Pumpkins* (80 min. of silent work by Emile Cohl), *The Best of Zagreb Film*, *The Cartoons of Bob Godfrey*, 10 different compilation tapes of the work of Ub Iwerks, *Contemporary Estonian Animation*, and hundreds of other titles. Of course they have great Warner Bros. and Disney titles, Jan Svankmajer, early work by Willis O'Brien, and other items you would expect to find in a great collection. For a free 70 or 80 page catalog call (800) 331-6197 or go to www.facets.org to see their on-line catalog (look for on-line sales items).

"THE HAND BEHIND THE MOUSE" BY JOHN KENWORTHY AND LESLIE IWERKS, Disney Editions, New York, \$24.95 If you are at all interested in the history of American animation, this is an important book for you to read. While the key points in the book are covered by Ms Iwerks video of the same name, the book has a lot more depth to it and contains lots of details not included in her documentary. In the book you get an idea about what sort of a guy Ub was like, you learn about his working and social relationship with Walt (from 1919 until Walt's death in 1966). You learn about the growth and development of Ub's artistic skills from his being an expert at lettering in the early '20's to his being able to design and draw animated characters better and faster than any one else by the late '20's.

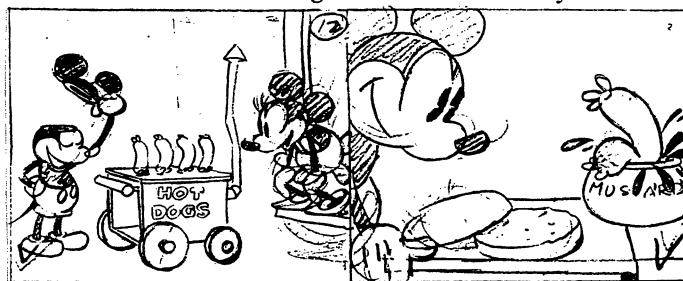
There are many surprises in the book including solid information on how Mickey was actually developed and Ub's role in creating the mouse. Leslie Iwerks provides a detailed account as to why Ub left the Disney studio in 1930. She even provides some of the incidents that influenced him to do so. There is unexpected and interesting information about the life of the two animation greats in the 1920's including details about their first two



studios going bankrupt, studio decorum, their romances, values, work ethics, and much more.

Perhaps the biggest surprise for me was all of Ub's contributions to the Disney studio from 1940 until his death in 1971. Using the excellent records of the Disney archives, interviews with people who worked with him and other accounts, this section really comes alive and paints a clear picture as to who this remarkable man was. In contrast, the section on his career from 1930 - '40 as a producer of cartoons seemed somewhat weak as most of the people the authors needed to interview were no longer alive when they undertook this project and there were fewer archival records available. For example, we are told Ub spent a lot of time in the early 1930's in a basement workshop inventing things, but we are only told what two of those invention were. His multiplane camera stand, first used in a Willie Whopper cartoon in 1934 was a remarkable achievement. He also developed a distortion disc or lens that was placed in front of the camera lens to suggest Flip the Frog was high on opium in *A Chinaman's Chance* 1933. I wonder what other brilliant things he developed in the early '30's.

While the life of Ub Iwerks may be too esoteric to make any best seller list, it certainly should be on your must read list if you are at all interested in his career. It is an easy, enjoyable, fast read. You might want to keep your copy of Maltin's *Of Mice and Magic* handy when you read it as I found myself checking his filmography from time to time. The authors don't include every date you might want to know. *The Hand Behind the Mouse* is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of animation history. K. C.



"THE HAND BEHIND THE MOUSE: THE UB IWERKS STORY" TO AIR ON TV. IT IS ALSO OUT ON HOME VIDEO Leslie Iwerk's informative documentary is scheduled to play on cable TV on the Independent Film Channel (IFC) four times: November 15 at 12:15 pm and 6:15 pm and November 27 at 11:45 am and 6:15 pm. They are showing a print with 3 or 4 minutes cut from it. A much shorter version played on Bravo (46-minute version) in September.

Buena Vista Home Video released the film on VHS on September 11. The video contains 2 bonus Mickey Mouse cartoons, *Plane Crazy* and *Steamboat Willie* (including outtakes and a previously censored scene). The film was narrated by Kelsey Grammer and features historic home movies, clips from his cartoons and on-camera statements by John Lasseter, Tippi Hedren, Ollie Johnston, Virginia Davis, Roy Disney Jr., Chuck Jones and other animators and scholars.

Hopefully the tape will be easier to get than the book. I tried to find the book at Borders and the downtown Disney Store without luck. It is available from Amazon.com. Any good bookstore can order you a copy.



FLEXIBILITY IN THE FACE

THERE'S A TENDENCY TO FORGET HOW MOBILE OUR FACES REALLY ARE IN ACTION - AND IT'S ALWAYS SHOCKING TO SEE HOW MUCH DISTORTION THERE IS WHEN WE LOOK AT LINE ACTION OF ACTORS' CLOSE-UPS, FRAME BY FRAME.



ABOUT "THE ANIMATOR'S SURVIVAL KIT" BY RICHARD WILLIAMS I was asked not to write a full review until the book is released, but I can tell you that I was given a proof copy and it is terrific! I showed it to animator Kevin Coffey and he was amazed by its contents. He called it "an exceptional learning tool" and feels it will replace Preston Blair's books (created in the late '40's) as the basic primer for animators. It goes a lot further than Blair's work. Coffey believes Williams has done a great service by creating this work for animators. It frees them from struggling to figure out how to move humans and animals and lets them concentrate on doing creative things with their drawings. The book's tentative price is \$30 in paperback and \$50 for hardcover from Faber and Faber, New York & London.

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM OF CARTOON ART TO LEAVE FLORIDA. Due to an increasing debt, the museum will be leaving Boca Raton, Florida. The \$3.8 million building will be put up for sale to pay off the museum's \$2 million debt. An attempt to save the museum in its present location failed despite lots of national publicity. They tried to auction off their Ub Iwerks *Steamboat Willie* storyboards for over a million dollars, but nobody was willing to pay what they wanted. Now they hope to preserve the collection of more than 200,000 pieces of comic strips, editorial cartoons and other works by moving to an affordable space in New York or Connecticut. The museum was founded in 1972 by *Beetle Bailey* creator Mort Walker. It moved south from Rye, NY in 1996, but it never drew the crowds that were needed to make the adventure profitable. They have presented several major exhibits of animation art over the years. Many of the works have come from Mike Glad's amazing animation archive in Fremont, CA.

Meanwhile plans for **San Francisco's Cartoon Art Museum** remain vague. Their galleries were closed in April. They now have a downtown office and are looking for the right location to move to. It was decided that their original plan to move to a storefront on Market Street near the Warfield wouldn't work.

3RD WEEK WITH THE MASTERS IN INDIA has announced a few of their special guests. They are Raoul Servais, Piet Kroons, J.J. Sedelmaier, Paul Driessen, Jimmy

Murakami, Wendy Tilby and "many more." The event is Oct. 29 - Nov. 2. Toonzanimation.com

THE INTERNET HASN'T GONE AWAY. MEMBERS ARE FINDING EXCITING NEW THINGS ON IT Chris Lanier recently sent an e-mail note to friends that listed over a dozen animated works on the web that he recommends. Some first appeared this year on the web and most are at **Animation Express** at www.hotwired.lycos.com I found the works he discusses at **Animation Express** using their "browse all animation" search feature. There are almost 300 works posted on the site. The rest are on much smaller sites. I've visited most of his picks and was delighted to see a rich variety of aesthetic approaches. None of his picks are offensive or are examples of stupid pre-teen humor.



Within hours of getting Lanier's list Adrienne Crew wrote and suggested I take a look at *Angry Little Asian Girl* by Lela Lee. It is illustrated radio, a non-animated cartoon strip with a strong soundtrack. It has politically correct content and is a refreshing experience. It appears Lela Lee has only done 5 episodes, but she has been prolific doing comic strips. Her work can be found at www.angrylittlesiangirl.com, on news.iwon.com and at netbroadcaster.com. *Asia Week* ran a nice article about her in their Dec. 10, 1998 issue, asiaweek.com.

WEBTOONS by Chris Lanier

I restricted myself to animation done expressly for the web, or with web tools - there's plenty of great stuff done for film or video that's been distributed for the web, but I'm leaving those out of the loop for now.

The first one up actually stretches the idea of what "animation" is - there's no story here, just a set of creatures you can interact with (and create your own variations of). The interactivity of the thing (and the communitarian nature of the site, where people post up creatures they've created to a centralized "zoo") makes it a definitively web phenomenon. And if giving faked life to lines and dots through motion isn't animation at its most basic, I don't know what is... www.sodaplay.com

Animation Express is a great collection of web cartoons. It's probably the most "artistic" umbrella of internet animation - cartoons as personal expression. I haven't gone through all the cartoons there, but several have caught my fancy - some for their look or style more than the story (but it's interesting to me to see how Flash has been utilized to develop its own effective native "looks"):

A stream-of-visual-consciousness animation called *Drawing 2* by Michael Strum. hotwired.lycos.com

This is a very atmospheric dream-short starring *Mr Man* hotwired.lycos.com The easiest way to see *Mr Man* cartoons is to go to the *Mr Man* archive. Start with the first one and progress chronologically - they build off each other in a very interesting and funny way. The timing and the art on these are a sublime use of Flash - the *Mr. Man* series is

probably my favorite Flash series going whitehouseanimationinc.com

Piazzolla by Mirek Nisenbaum is a semi-abstract animation (with several representational digressions) illustrating a piece of music hotwired.lycos.com

Time Is by Theodore Usher is a Flash animation with a wonderful textural quality to the art hotwired.lycos.com

Some great stylization in this, "*Bee Careful*" hotwired.lycos.com

Fetch by Nina Paley. This one's cheating slightly – while it uses the Flash software, it was intended for 35mm film, and lives on the web as a Quicktime. But it's darn good, and it's also by my pal Nina Paley, so I'm including it hotwired.lycos.com

And one more nepotistic cheat, *Inside Out* by Eric Feng – I met Eric at the Ottawa Animation Festival, and this piece of his is quite beautiful – existing on the web as a Quicktime, but being authored in a combination of Flash and AfterEffects hotwired.lycos.com

Work Out by Mauro. I really like the movement in this one, "Mr Questionhead Works it Out" hotwired.lycos.com

Moving away from "Animation Express," there's *Brain Girl*, which I first saw at RESFEST – episode 5, "Fishing," is my favorite of the ones I've seen rsub.com

Symbolman beat out *Romanov* at the World Animation Celebration last year – particularly interesting is the way he tells the story without using traditional "shots" – it's just informational ideograms melting into one another: symbolman.com

Another animators I met at the Ottawa festival has a charming series called *Stick Girl* – the safe sex one is my favorite of the ones I've seen: stickgirl.com

Jim Woodring, who's one of the great contemporary cartoonists, has adapted one of his *Frank* comic strips for web animation. To be honest, the story works better in its original comic strip form, but it's very promising that Woodring is out there making web toons: hollywoodcomics.com

And lastly, the storyline on this one is nothing special, but the style is absolutely delicious (elsewhere on his site, he has a Quicktime movie of a great animated "video" he made for the Hank Williams tune *Ramblin' Man*): augenblickstudios.com

DISNEY WILL NOT RELEASE MIYAZAKI'S "SPIRITED AWAY" Although Miyazaki signed a multi-million dollar deal with Disney to release his past films on film and video in the US, it appears the company has lost interest in Miyazaki. *Spirited Away*, his new animated feature is a top grossing film in Japan, but Disney/Buena Vista appears to have no plans to releasing it here. (They probably have first right to accept or refuse it for distribution and there are indications that they have decided to refused it.)

David Jessen, VP of acquisitions at Buena Vista, said "Disney currently has no official plans to release any more of Miyazaki's films in America." Supposedly Disney was disappointed with Miramax's release of *Princess Mononoke* which was the highest grossing film in Japanese history (\$150 million) until *Titanic* broke that record. It only grossed \$2 million at US theaters. Disney's video release of Miyazaki's *Kiki's Delivery Service*, 1998, sold over a

million copies, but executives apparently have forgotten about that modest success.

"A million dollars theatrically, to me that's big money," said Marvin Gleicher, president of Manga Entertainment in an article about his releasing *Blood: The Last Vampire*, a new Japanese animated feature. "I don't think another company would make money." The article by Michael Stroud (*Wired News*, Aug. 27, 2001) went on to say "Hollywood, by contrast, considers a film that earns less than \$50 million at the box office a failure."

There is a rumor that the loss of interest has something to do with *Atlantis*, a film influenced by Japanese animation. It did not break any records at the box office. I've herd some key Disney executives simply do not relate well to animated product that deviates from Disney's traditional format. More likely their accounting executives don't see enough profit potential in Miyazaki's work. He is considered Japan's greatest animation director by some fans and writers, but that isn't a good reason for Disney to release more of his classics on video (and they have the rights to several titles). For more on what Disney executives might be thinking, read the next article. (One theater booker that I asked about *Spirited Away* hopes Miramax will take it on without Disney's assistance.) KC

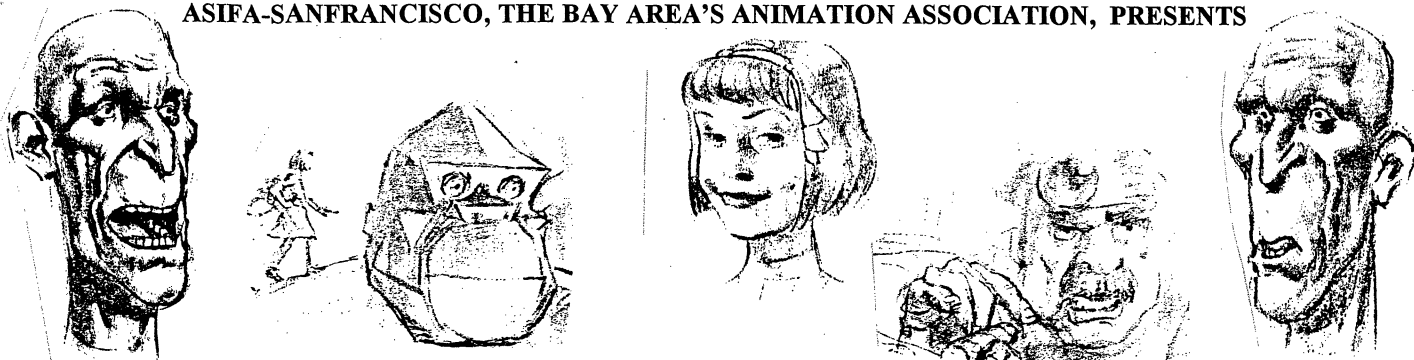
COMMENTS ON THE STRANGE BEHAVIOR OF STUDIO EXECUTIVES DUMPING PROJECTS AFTER THEY ARE COMPLETED AND READY TO OPEN by Karl Cohen It may seem odd that a studio will put millions into producing something and will then dump it rather than go to bat and promote it to the public. Some films, like *Spirited Away*, may never open in the U.S., while others like *Iron Giant*, *James and the Giant Peach* and *Monkey Bone* opened with almost no publicity.

It appears that the people who control the distribution of features at huge corporations like Disney and Warner Brothers are a different breed than those who approve and oversee the making of the productions. Also, since it takes so long to bring an animated project out, in some cases the executives that fought to make the film are no longer with the company when it comes out. (That happened to *Monkey Bone*.) The distribution executives have the power to decide that it isn't worth risking more money on something that they feel isn't going to be a sure hit.

Large companies are not in the habit of turning films they can't market easily over to smaller distributors who can try to develop marketing and ad campaigns that are designed for smaller niche markets. People distributing Japanese animation (not Disney/Miramax who handles Miyazaki's work) know how to target their products towards the smaller numbers of fans that support these films and make their releases profitable. Unfortunately it appears it isn't worth the large corporations time and money to tailor films they consider of questionable profitability to the "limited" numbers of people that might enjoy discovering the works. It seems Disney, Warner Bros. and other large studios feel that if the whole world isn't going to love their latest product, it is wiser to drop their interest in it and go on to something that they hope will be a sure hit.

One animation scholar wrote me, "Most movie executives don't care about animation. The only reason any of

ASIFA-SANFRANCISCO, THE BAY AREA'S ANIMATION ASSOCIATION, PRESENTS



ILM'S "WORK IN PROGRESS"

DIRECTOR TOM BERTINO IN-PERSON

PROCEEDED BY

A TRIBUTE TO BILLY GREENE

Wednesday, October 17, 7:30 PM

At the Exploratorium, 7:30 PM, public invited, free

Tom Bertino's *Work in Progress* is an experimental all digital animated 35mm short that was made at ILM to show-off new ideas and an unusual aesthetic approach for a company known for photo-realistic work. Bertino, a director with the company, has been working in secret for several years with a research and development team set up to explore an exciting new approach for ILM to render visuals. Bertino says computer animation offers endless stylistic and aesthetic possibilities, but until now the company has mainly concentrated on ultra-realistic images. He describes the new work as "painterly" and "illustrative."

This is our first chance to see what ILM's Tom Bertino is up to. He will talk about the challenges of making this work and may show behind-the-scenes footage including a video clip of the British voice actors that was used as reference footage by the animators. As a bonus we will show his first professional work. He did ink and paint on Sally Cruickshank's *Make Me Psychic*. **Note:** this is not the incomplete short version of ILM's film show at SIGGRAPH. This is the longer completed version.

Bertino was asked to describe the content of *Work in Progress*, but all he would say is "*You won't be bored by it. It provokes violent reactions. People either love it or hate it.*" I asked ILM's public relations department if they could describe it. They responded, "*In a fantastic workshop hidden deep in the world of natural wonders, two peculiar inventors squabble over their latest creation. What's more important? Concept or implementation? A mysterious third party intervenes and provides the elusive, missing ingredient.*"

Tom Bertino has been contributing to ILM's greatness for many years. He was nominated for an Academy Award and a British Academy Award in 1994 for Best Achievement in Visual Effects for his work on the groundbreaking computer graphics in *The Mask*. At present he is working as animation director on *Time Machine*. He was the Ground Battle Animation Supervisor on *Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace* and Animation Director/Special Effects Supervisor on *Flubber*. His Animation Supervisor credits also include *Casper* and *101 Dalmatians*. He joined ILM in 1986 as supervisor of the rotoscope department. His credits in that capacity include work on over 40 features (from *Howard the Duck*, 1986 to *Death Becomes Her*, 1992.) Perhaps his biggest disappointment at ILM was being co-director of an all digital animation *Frankenstein* feature in 1999, but the project was eventually canceled.

BILLY GREENE was a really nice stop-motion animator who was murdered in front of his apartment in September in Emeryville. His latest short film, *Thought Bubble*, a sensitive film about a down-and-out street person, premiered at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival and went on to be screened at several major festivals in Brazil, Korea, at France's Annecy and by the New York Film Festival. His earlier short *Malfunction* was shown on opening night of the 1998 Film Arts Festival and went on to be shown at Slamdance. His commercial career includes stints at 181 Productions in New York, Clayart Trickfilm Studio in Frankfurt, Germany and Will Vinton Studio in Portland where he worked on the *PJs*. He returned to the Bay Area 5 weeks before his death to work on *Phantom Investigators*, a stop-motion series being produced in S. F. by Wholesome Products for Warner Bros. TV.

them cared during they 1990's was that they couldn't ignore the huge grosses of *The Lion King*. Now, *Shrek's* and Pixar's powerhouse grosses have Hollywood caring about CGI. Japanese animation still means nothing to Hollywood (save for a breakout fad like *Pokemon*). We still have a ways to go to change the system."

Books, record, tapes, and documentary films are also hurt by current business practices. At Disney the current business philosophy appears to have affected not only the release of Miyazaki's films to theaters, but also the release of videos, books and other products. Disney has helped finance/distribute several fine books, documentaries and videos including Leslie Iwerks' recent projects, books by John Canemaker and the documentary *Frank and Ollie*. Once these works are completed and the distribution contracts are signed, it appears Disney does not always go out of its way to promote them. While John Canemaker is quite pleased with the way they handle his book promotions, it was quite evident that Leslie Iwerks got almost no support from Disney when she visited the Bay Area in July (they had plenty of advanced notice, yet they didn't line up any book signings for her despite the company having several stores in the area.) I suspect a hungrier, smaller distributor would be more aggressive and would try to develop more creative marketing schemes.

It appears the current job cuts in all areas of Disney's corporate empire have hurt their publishing and distribution businesses. Cutting staff sizes to try to increase the profit margins (and hopefully impress the stock market) has resulted in fewer people to do the labor intensive chores of marketing and promotion.

Another issue is Disney wanting to have some control over what is said about them in books published by other publishers. In the past they have asked some authors with non-Disney publishers to submit their text before they would grant them permission to publish images from Disney films. Sometimes permission to use photographs of Disney artwork has come at the last moment. This practice can inhibit free speech.

There are cases where permission to use some images has been denied by Disney. When Jerry Beck wrote *The 50 Greatest Cartoons* for Turner, Disney granted the publisher permission to use

images from classic cartoons on the condition they did not run any images from the Donald Duck film *Der Fuehrer's Face*. Beck used the cover of the public domain sheet music as an illustration for this Academy Award winning short.

FESTIVALS

WEST COAST STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL DEADLINE IS JANUARY 18 for an early April event. It is open to all college students, no entry fee, animation category. This year's theme is "Overcoming Obstacles." Entries may be shot on any format but must be submitted on 1/2 inch VHS tape. The festival says they are a highly publicized, international event (I've never herd of them). For more information contact: Joey Garner, 24 Vidal Drive, San Francisco, California 94132, USA, (415) 430-1269 ex 0903; www.wcsfilmfest.org

HIROSHIMA 2002 INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL The call for films is out for this major event. Entries deadline is April 10. No entry fee and festival pays for return of prints. A few cash prizes, judges are often well known animators. For forms contact Karl Cohen karlcohen@earthlink.com or (415) 386-1004 or contact Hiroshima 2002 Festival Office 4-17, Kakomachi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima 730-0812 Japan e-mail: hiroanim@urban.ne.jp

11TH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ANIMATED FILMS STUTTGART deadline for videos (VHS NTSC) is Dec. 1, entries must be shown in 16mm, 35mm or Betacam SP PAL. Prize money, no entry fee. Event is in April. For entry form Film und Medienfestival GmbH, Breitscheidstr. 4, 70174 Stuttgart Germany www.festival-gmbh.de

ASPEN SHORTSEEST DEADLINE NOV. 12 & DEC 28 cash prizes, entry fee, previews on VHS, but only shows 16mm, 35mm or BetaSP at event. (970) 925-6882, 110 east Hallam Suite 102 Aspen, Colorado 81611 aspenshortfest.org



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This issue was written by Karl Cohen with contributions from Chris Lanier, Adrienne Crew, Kevin Coffey, AWN.COM, Animation Blast, Cartoon Research, Spike and Mike and other sources. Laura Tulloss did the layout, Shirley Smith handled the production and the mailing crew included Smith, Cohen and Ron Seawright.



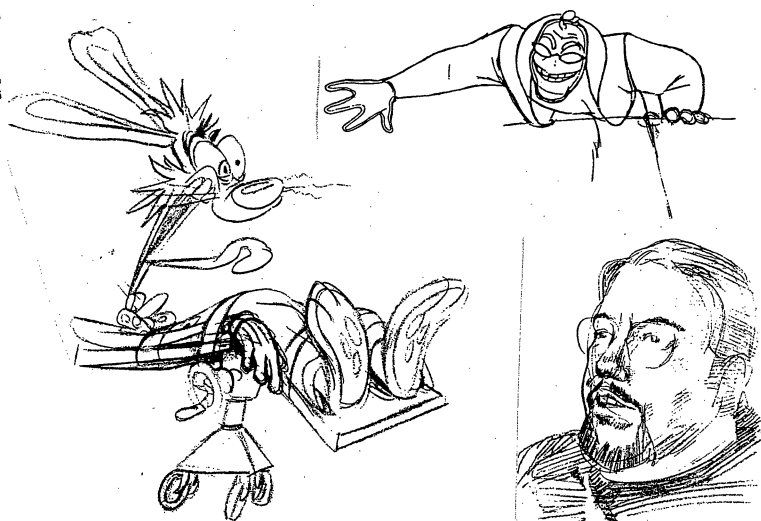
Read THE HAND BEHIND THE MOUSE by Iwerks & Kenworthy

ASIFA

SAN FRANCISCO

The International Film Association
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NOVEMBER, 2001



ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO PRESENTS
AN EVENING WITH
TOM SITO

Sito has been called "one of the key players in the Disney Animation Revival" (*AWN*, January, 2001)

**WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 7, 7:30 PM
AT THE EXPLORATORIUM**

Tom Sito has been working in the industry for 26 years. He recently co-directed Warner Bros.' *Osmosis Jones*. His Disney screen credits include *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty & The Beast*, *Aladdin*, *The Lion King*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, *Pocahontas*, *Fantasia 2000* and *Dinosaurs*. In 1995 he left a Disney directorship post to help set up the Dreamworks Animation unit. At Dreamworks he recruited and trained staff and worked on *Shrek*, *The Prince Of Egypt*, *Antz*, *Spirit Of The Cimmaron* and other projects. Prior to joining Disney he directed 22 hours of Saturday morning TV shows (*Fat Albert*, *She-Ra*, etc.) and numerous commercials. His credits as an animator include the title sequence of *City Slickers* and the Emmy winner *Ziggy's Gift*, 1982.

His personal work includes the beautifully animated and politically poignant *Propagandance* (*Animation Celebration*, Vol. 2). He teaches at the University of Southern California and California Institute of the Arts, has written numerous articles about animation and has lectured at NYU, SVA, UCLA, AFI, Microsoft, Sheridan College and other institutions.

Sito has been President of the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonist's Union Local 839 for many years. He has been a vice president of ASIFA-Hollywood and is a member of the Motion Picture Academy, the National Cartoonists Society and Hollywood Heritage.

In 1998 Tom Sito was added to *Animation Magazine's* list of "The 100 Most Important People in Animation."

CLIFF BOULE OF PDI/DREAMWORKS DIRECTED A "THREE LITTLE PIGS" VISA SPOT FOR BROADCAST IN LATIN AMERICA The spot shows what happens when you build with straw and sticks, so the practical pig buys bricks at a store and charges his purchase. The spot is available in Spanish, Portuguese and English. It was made by a 25-person team at PDI in 3 months (on time and on budget). Laura Lockwood was the producer, and Tim Cheung the lead animator. PDI used some of the new technology developed for *Shrek* on the ad. www.pdi.com

WILD BRAIN CREATED THE "FEED THE RUMBLE" CAMPAIGN FOR KID CUISINE They have completed three 30 second animated TV commercials for ConAgra's Kid Cuisine line of frozen meals. They were directed by David Feiss (creator of Cartoon Network's hit TV series *Cow & Chicken*).

The campaign features three madcap adventures with KC the Penguin and his animal pals. In one ad they plan to search for the Forgotten Kingdom, but first they must eat a lunch of Kid Cuisine. The animation was created using a blend of cel animation, Mac Graphics and digital ink and paint.

Credits for the ads include animation director Dave Marshall, background and color design by George Evelyn, Mac Graphics and paint by Scott Adams and Cynthia Crimmins and digital ink and paint and compositing by Danya O'Brien, Kenrick Walz, Isaac Payne and Bryan Dawson. The assistant animators were Billy Burger, Amber MacLean, Brad Rau and Dick Hill. The cleanup animation was by Wang Film in Taiwan.

WILD BRAIN INC. CONTINUES TO EXPAND. THEY HAVE OPENED A LONDON OFFICE First they opened a branch in Germany and now Wild Brain UK. It is being headed by Mike Smith who spent the last 10 years in the US working at Warner Bros. Feature Animation, Nickelodeon Features, and Colossal Pictures. He is from England. In the mid-'80s, he founded Felix Films, the first animation studio to represent directors and designers with their own show reels. Smith's past clients include Nike, MTV, ESPN and the BBC. He has won numerous industry awards including Clio and Annnies for Coca-Cola and Levi's and a Silver Hugo at the Chicago Film Festival for his Nike Charles Barkley commercial. He directed animated sequences for Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers* and United Artist's *Tank Girl*. He also directed the 20 minute short *1001 Nights* which premiered with the Los Angeles Symphony.

Nikki Kefford is the production manager in London. Also joining the staff is animation director Tom Gravestock who has been working in London for the past 10 years directing commercials at Picasso Pictures. The studio's first production is a commercial campaign.



LIVE IN THE SANTA CRUZ AREA? WATCH THE "KEN KEARNEY SHOW" ON PUBLIC ACCESS TV Over the years he has interviewed several retired animators who have lived in the area including Lee Blair. He just sent a tape of his 61st program (August, 2001) which is a half hour visit with Jim Faris. Faris edited soundtracks for MGM cartoons from 1946 - 1954. The most unusual part of the interview was Faris' description of MGM's cartoon producer Fred Quimby. According to the studio rumor mill Quimby was a film exhibitor who got his job at the studio in the 1920's for taking the "fall" for a higher-up

who did something illegal. Apparently Quimby's reward was a job for life at MGM.

Many of us know Quimby's name from the credits of Tom and Jerry and Tex Avery cartoons, but nobody seems to talk or write about him except to say he had little to do with the creation of the cartoons. Faris say Quimby once told visitors to the studio that a cel washer was preparing cels for animators to use. He was amazed that Quimby didn't know animators draw on paper and not on cels.

As a producer of short films and cartoons he paid little attention to the creative process. He did watch the budgets, enjoyed his fancy convertible, took long lunches followed by afternoon naps and he often left the studio early according to Faris. The show gets repeated from time to time on cable channel 27 in Santa Cruz.

ILM IS PRESENTLY WORKING ON IMAGES FOR 13 PRODUCTIONS They are *K-19* for Paramount, *Signs* and *Big Trouble* for Disney, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *The Majestic*, and *The Time Machine* for Warner Bros., *Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones* for Lucasfilm Ltd, *Men in Black 2* for Sony, *Minority Report* for Dreamworks, *Imposter* and *Gangs of New York* for Miramax and *ET* (rerelease) for Universal.

PAUL NASS PARTICIPATED IN A UNICEF PSA MADE USING FLASH AND THE INTERNET He was a lead animator on a Freedom from Discrimination message for a Rights of the Child campaign. He worked with artists from the US, Canada and Slovenia on the project. It was screened at Annecy in June. This is the 3rd UNICEF PSA Nass has worked on.

IF WE HAVE A CHRISTMAS BOOK, TAPE, CD, CRAFT AND GIFT SALE AT OUR WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 19 ASIFA EVENT, DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SELL? I'm trying to decide if we should make a holiday sale part of the event. If you have items contact Karl Cohen ASAP so I can decide if we should expand the event into a screening and sale. (415) 386-1004 or karlcohen@earthlink.net Call by the 15th of Nov. if possible. If we hold the sale your name can be on the flyer with the types of items you will be selling.

MIKE NOLAN HAS BECOME THE EDITOR AND CHIEF BOTTLE WASHER OF WWW.ASIFA-SF.ORG He has worked as web-master for the past year. John Grimes has been writing the content, but will step down to the role of associate and let Nolan become our editor-in-chief. Nolan can be contacted at webmaster@asifa-sf.org

The site has had 79,700 hits this year with over 11,000 in October (as of Oct. 20th), so people are finding out about us. Again thanks to John Grimes and Becky Wells for figuring out and establishing something the animation community can use.

E-MAIL COMMENTS AND TIPS "Out of all the ASIFA chapter news that I've seen...ASIFA-SF is BY FAR the best. Lot of news. Lot of personality. No holding back. I like it mucho much." Chris Robinson, Ottawa

Regarding my comment to a friend about a mutual friend who is **overworked and underpaid** I was told "Your description of (name withheld) aptly summarizes the whole game industry, I'm in the same boat, working 7 days/week on a fixed salary, I believe unionization should become viable for game artist/animators, maybe an ASIFA event for the future." Note: ILM may be the only union shop in the Bay Area animation/special effects industry. The union representing their artists is IATSE Local 16.

Somebody sent me a *Chronicle* article (10/1/01) about Barry Bonds hitting his 70th. The last 3 sentences are about local animator **Kevin Coffey**. "Kevin Coffey of San Francisco predicted Bonds will do more than just break McGwire's record with a 71st home run. 'There's no stopping him. He'll get 74 or 75,' Coffey said. 'He can hit one a day'."

David Silverman, one of the original directors/animators of *The Simpsons*, left Pixar after completing his work on *Monsters, Inc.* as co-director. He has moved back to LA and will direct *The Simpsons* first feature.

A DVD of **Richard Williams'** defaced *Thief and Cobbler* is being given away (free) in Canada in boxes of Fruit Loops cereal.

BILLY GREENE'S "THOUGHT BUBBLE" has been accepted in the Shorts International Film Festival in NYC, November 12-15, and will be shown at least three times over the course of the festival.

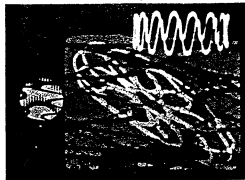
Also, the director of the NW Film Festival in Portland has asked to show *Thought Bubble* at the festival Nov. 2-10, even though Billy missed the entry deadline.

THE CARTOON ART MUSEUM HAS FOUND A HOME They will take over the space that housed the Ansel Adams Center at 655 Mission on Nov. 1. The museum hopes to reopen in December. Unfortunately the photography center is deeply in debt and will be selling off their collection to pay off creditors.

JONATHAN LUSKIN, A RETIRED FOUNDING MEMBER OF ILM'S CGI DEPT, HAS DIRECTED ANOTHER PLAY *Losing Father's Body* at the Phoenix Theatre II, 653 Geary, was directed by Luskin. It opened in /October and closes Nov. 10.



Hy Hirsh



Eneri



Autumn Spectrum

THE KINETICA 3 SERIES SHOWN AT THE PFA AND CINEMATEQUE WAS A REMARKABLE SELECTION OF RARE ARTISTIC GEMS Jordan Belson's *Bardo* was a mesmerizing 13 minute adventure that was so engaging that it seemed like only 5 or 6 minutes had passed when it ended. The images were breathtakingly beautiful and he left me wanting to see more.

The 2 programs of abstract animation included several more surprises. Hy Hirsh's 6 films in the show were quite impressive. He lived in San Francisco for part of his life (he did still photography for the DeYoung Art Museum for several years and exhibited his photography here) and each was a different type of visual exploration.

The 20 page catalog for the show informs us why you may not have seen Hirsh's work before. He died in Paris of an apparent heart attack while driving. His films were impounded by the French police for several years as a film can in the wreck contained cannabis. (The police lost some of the prints.) Apparently only Creative Film Society in Los Angeles distributed his work for many years and since few people knew what they were like they were rarely seen.

The Iota Center in LA recently found funds to restored several of Hirsh's films. There are plans to release a tape of his work.

Hirsh information wanted. Iota's director Cindy Keefer is researching his life and has found very little information about him. She has yet to find out where his local exhibits were and other details about his life in the Bay Area. (The DeYoung's records do not indicate what photos he did for them and the SF Public Library only found 2 minor references to him). If you can contribute to her knowledge or suggest leads (310) 842-8704 info@iotacenter.org 3765 Cardiff Ave. Suite 305, LA, CA 90034

LOCAL SCREENINGS

"T. REX: BACK TO THE CRETACEOUS" IN 3D IMAX IS A LOT MORE FUN THAN "JURASSIC PARK 3" - NOW AT THE SONY METREON IN SAN FRANCISCO The 3D effects are played up nicely, so you almost get a dinosaur in your lap in one scene and you can almost reach out and touch one in another. The scenes with dinosaurs are on the screen long enough for you to actually enjoy seeing them. In *Jurassic Park* there were so many fast cuts designed to build tension and scare that you rarely got a good look at the menacing monsters. In the IMAX film they are often gentle creatures. While Blue Sky/VIFX's animals may not be quite as realistic and finely crafted as ILM's work, it is good enough for me to recommend your seeing this film.

The film is worthwhile for other reasons. The script is well constructed and footage of a modern and a historic archaeological dig is quite convincing. My wife feels the film is suitable for 4th graders through adults, but may bore little ones. It even has educational value, unlike other recent dinosaur movies. Another reason you might enjoy it is simply the fact that IMAX is a great entertainment delivery system and this is one of the best IMAX movies to date.

Coming January 1 in IMAX, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. The Metreon ran the trailer for the Disney feature that opens next year. It looks sharp, the colors are rich and the animation has never looked better. The music heard over the IMAX 6 channel stereo system sounds fantastic. If you enjoyed the film when it came out, the new version with a new scene added should be a great film experience for you.



Wednesday, November 7, 7:30 PM,
ASIFA-SF presents AN EVENING WITH TOM SITO
(see flyer for details) at the
Exploratorium, free, public invited

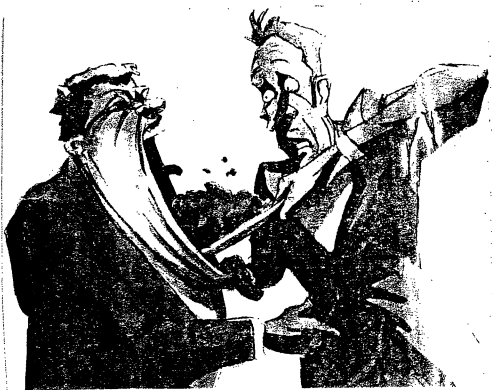
Thursday, November 8, **PREMIER OF NINA PALEY'S "THE STORK" WITH LIVE MUSIC BY NIK PHELPS AND THE SPROCKET ENSEMBLE** plus other animated films from the US and Russia. This fine evening of *Ideas in Animation* will also include musical guest stars Connie Champagne and Mr. Lucky. At the Red Vic on Haight Street in SF.

Thursday, Nov. 8, **AMY HICKS' HATCHING BEAUTY** in the "Pop Pop Program" of the Film Arts Festival. Balboa Theatre, 9 PM. The 9 minute work intertwines live action, stop-motion, and found footage to illustrate human consumption. This is Hicks' 9th personal production and it was made in part through a grant from FAF.

Friday, Nov. 9, **LENA PODESTA'S "HORSE PLAY"** in the "Animal Magnetism" program of the Film Arts Festival, 9 PM, Balboa Theatre. A 2 minute work using drawings on paper that explores the dream world of a sleeping woman. It is "part whimsy gone wrong." It was made at the UCLA Animation Workshop.

Friday, Nov. 9 - Thursday, Nov. 15 at the Lumiere on Calif. near Polk. **NEW FROM JAPAN, "METROPOLIS"** This is a spectacular looking work on video and I suspect it will be even more visually stunning on a big screen. It is based on a manga by the late Osamu Tezuka and was adopted for the screen by Katsuhiro Otomo (director of *Akira*). The sci-fi story was inspired by Lang's *Metropolis*, with the workers living underground and the rich living in skyscrapers.

If you enjoy anime with spectacular sets and first rate art direction plus lots of action, this film is a must see. I was impressed with most of it and when my viewing was interrupted by the phone, I couldn't wait to get back to it. It is a great yarn, but I wish the script had stronger character development and was clear about what motivated them. Still, the film was a lot more engaging than 95% of the films I saw last summer. Print is in Japanese with English subtitles.

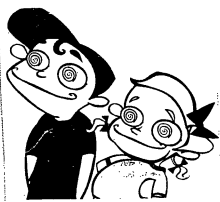


Friday and Saturday, Nov. 9 & 10 and Nov. 16 & 17 **SPIKE & MIKE'S SICK AND TWISTED FESTIVAL OF ANIMATION** at the Castro at 7, 9:20 and 11:30 the 1st weekend (also 2 & 4:30 on Sat.). Second week shown at 11:30 pm only. Midnight shows continue in SF on weekends at the AMC's Van Ness Theatre Nov. 30 - Dec. 22.

Also in Berkeley at the Oaks Theatre, 1875 Solano Ave., Nov. 9 - 20. At the Park in Lafayette, Nov. 9 - 15; Crest in Sacramento, Nov. 9th - Dec. 8 on weekends and the Towne Theatre in San Jose, Nov. 30 - Jan. 3.

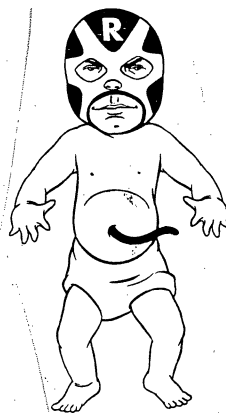
Warning: Three requests to review this program in advance on tape were turned down, suggesting to me that they are not proud of this show and do not want it reviewed. (In past years I have reviewed it.) Several really good films are in it, Plympton's *Eat*, Christopher Simon's *Hello, Dad, I'm in Jail* and John Magnuson/Lenny Bruce's *Thank You Mask Manc.* 1968, but I guess they are scraping the bottom of the barrel for "pee pee ka ka" humor to fill out the show.

Spike and Mike have created a gold mine with this series, but they are developing a negative reputation among young animators. They may offer great exposure for works selected, but while they profit the artists get next to nothing for their countless hours of work. I'm sure they pay Plympton well, but former students have complained loudly to me about the low pay offered them. If I were a young animator I'd think twice about the value of making a work with hopes it will be exhibited in this series. KC



Friday, Nov. 9 **ABSTRACT ANIMATION FILMS** at 8 pm and a multi-image screening at 9. Films by Oskar Fischinger, Len Lye, Adam Becket, Scott Bartlett, Harry Smith & other artists. Multi-images by Larry Ackerman and Will Cloughley. South of Market Cultural Center, 934 Brannon St. SF

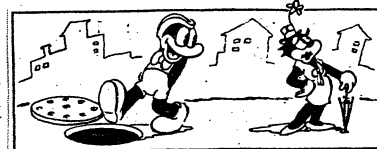
Sunday, Nov. 11 Film Arts Festival at the Castro presents at 11 AM, **MARCO POLO: RETURN TO XANADU** 82 minutes, an international production that includes ties to the Bay Area. Writer-producer Chris Holter went to SF State, and animation director and designer Arnie Wong worked in our area off and on for several years. The 35mm production is an action adventure film for kids. Holter co-wrote 4 of the songs. With Nina Paley's *Fetch*.



Sunday, Nov. 11 Film Arts Festival at the Castro presents at 1 PM, **DJ QBERT'S WAVE TWISTERS** a 46 minute animated DVD created by Syd Garon and Eric Henry. Billed as a "hip hop animated cartoon about communication, language, vision and the future. It's an eye-popping, hip-hop Fantasia, a turntable masterpiece." It is called "a sci-fi/kung-fu epic.. visual scratching: sampling from a wide variety of techniques."

Techniques used include traditional cel, 3D cgi, cut outs and photo collage. Some of my students at SF State got real excited when somebody lent me a preview tape (excerpt). I didn't relate to the soundtrack or the repetitive visuals at all, but it wasn't created for people my age.

November 14 - 16 and 18 - 20 **LESLIE IWERKS' "THE HAND BEHIND THE MOUSE"** (about the career of Ub Iwerks) with **Hitchcock's "THE BIRDS"** (Oscar winning special effects by Ub Iwerks) and two rarely seen cartoons by Ub Iwerks. Complete show 7:30 pm each night. Leslie Iwerks in-person Sunday, Nov. 18. They are showing the complete uncensored 93 minute version of Leslie's feature, not the 45 minute edited version shown on TV. The theatre plans to have Leslie's book for sale and also DVDs of Ub Iwerks cartoons. Fine Arts Cinema, 2451 Shattuck (at Haste) in Berkeley.



www.fineartscinema.com
(510) 848-1143

Sunday, November 25 The Old First Concert Series presents **NIK PHELPS AND THE SPROCKET ENSEMBLE**. At least two films will be shown, *Fur and Feathers*, animated on glass by a woman from Russia studying at CAL Arts and Nina Paley's *Fetch*. Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento at Van Ness, 4 pm. (415) 474-1608

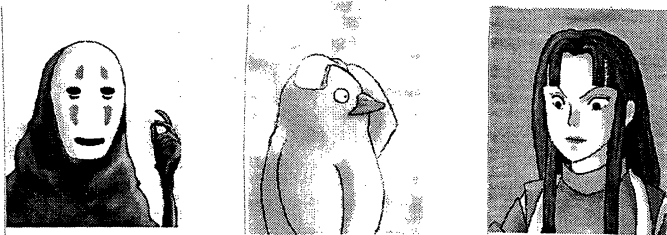
NATIONAL NEWS

UCLA TO SCREEN FAITH HUBLEY'S 24TH PERSONAL FILM in a program of films by Faith Hubley and Dan McLaughlin. Faith's latest film is *Northern Ice, Golden Sun*.

It conveys the Inuit's deep attachment to their land and their remarkable ability to adjust to the natural world. John and Faith Hubley together made 21 award winning films.

Dan McLaughlin has won many awards as an experimental animator and is the head of the UCLA Animation Workshop. Included is a new work, *The Shapes of Movement*, an experiment in rotating images narrated by Burt Lancaster. The program is Tuesday December 11, 7:30PM, Melnitz 1409, UCLA campus, free but please RSVP at 310-825-5829.

FOR LOCAL INFORMATION VISIT ASIFA-SF.ORG



MIYAZAKI'S "SPIRITED AWAY" PASSES "TITANIC" AS THE RECORD HOLDER FOR THE FILM SEEN BY THE MOST PEOPLE IN JAPAN according to *Variety* (first week of October). Although Disney isn't planning to exercise their option to distribute Miyazaki's *Spirited Away* in the US, people in Japan think it is worth seeing, and damn it, I want that pleasure too.

Since *Spirited Away* was released on July 20, 2001, 16.9 million people have seen it and it is still doing good box office. *Titanic* was only seen by 16.8 million people. So far *Titanic* has made more money in Japan as a lot of *Spirited Away* tickets have been sold at discounts. *Spirited Away* is expected to break the total gross income record soon.

I've asked friends why Disney's release of *Princess Monokee*, also directed by Miyazaki, only grossed \$2 million in the US when the film was a colossal hit in Japan. People felt Disney didn't market it properly. Jerry Beck wrote us, "With the resources of Disney/Miramax, *Mononoke* should have done a lot better. This is a film that needed buzz for the American art-movie crowd to discover it. They never gave that a chance. They should have released the film in a very limited set of theaters in its original Japanese language (with subtitles) months earlier than they did (It sat on their shelf for over a year - by then every anime fan in the country had the Japanese video or a bootleg copy). I could go on and on about how they should have handled it - (I made the same box office gross with *Akira* in 1990 with a two man distribution company and 8 prints) - needless to say Hollywood does not understand the audience for these films, nor how to market them to mainstream America."

"Anime features are not simply 'animated films' as Hollywood perceives them. It's a genre of animated film that has a cult fan-base. It could expand its reach (as Chinese martial arts films finally have), but only if the studios take time to understand it."

Another animation expert said, "it's only my opinion, but I feel that even though Disney did a poor job of marketing *Princess Mononoke* the film never had a chance of being the big hit in the US as it was in Japan. I do think it could have grossed more than the \$2 million it made, maybe something like \$10-15 million if marketed extremely well, but nothing nearing blockbuster status. The reason I say this is because I saw the film in theaters and couldn't believe how bad it was. Maybe there was something in the cultural translation that I didn't understand, but outside of the pre-existing anime fans, I can't imagine that film ever finding a very large audience."

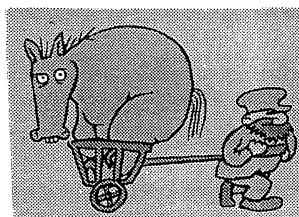
ALEKSANDRA KOREJWO SCREENING Korejwo is a Polish animator who creates animation using colored salts moved around with condor feathers. She was honored in September with a screening in Los Angeles. It was presented

by Acme Filmworks, ASIFA-Hollywood and Women In Animation. They showed 6 of her films and She gave a demonstration of her unusual animation techniques. The event was at the Directors Guild Theater in Los Angeles. It was Aleksandra's debut screening in the U.S.

Korejwo works directly under a top lit Oxberry camera on a field that measures 30" x 40." Her art is rendered and shot on ones. In her shorts the animated images flow to the movement and rhythm of classical music. A selection of her pastels can be viewed at www.acmefilmworks.com

She does commercial work in the U.S. with Ron Diamond's Acme Filmworks. Diamond is an unusual producer as he respects uniqueness and quality. In the past his company has created ads with several gifted animators including Bill Plympton and John Dilworth. A couple of years ago he organized and presented a 35mm ASIFA-SF program of new Canadian animation with Wendy Tilby and Amanda Forbis in-person at the Red Vic. He also supports animation scholarship and the solid reporting of animation news. He is a founder and owner of AWN.COM

MARK FLEISCHER, MAX'S GRANDSON, NAMED PRESIDENT OF MAINFRAME, U.S.A. This is a new division of the Canadian computer animation studio. Mainframe absorbed Mark's Fleischer Studios, Inc. in Los Angeles and the two companies are now developing a 3D CGI television series based on Max Fleischer's Betty Boop.



XETH FEINBERG'S "THE OLD COUNTRY" IS AN ENTERTAINING PARODY OF EASTERN EUROPEAN ANIMATION ON THE INTERNET The subtitled work was produced by the National Film

Board of Slovenia. It is an ambitious work that features several unusual old world cultural activities including peasants doing an ancient version of "bonk-a-mole." It is on a site that also features *Bilbo*, *Queer Duck* and other series. www.mishmashmedia.com

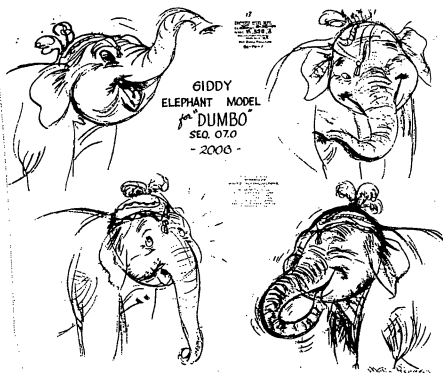
Xeth Feinberg is an independent animator, cartoonist and founder of NYC-based Mishmash Media, Inc. He is a pioneer of flash animation who created the award-winning *Bulbo* series, SCIFI.com's *Astro-Chimp*, and Icebox.com series *Hard Drinkin' Lincoln* and *Queer Duck*. His credits also include other webtoons and interactive gizmos. His non-Internet work has appeared on MTV, Comedy Central and in *The Village Voice*.

THE 2001 MARK DAVIS LECTURE ON ANIMATION WILL BE AN ANIME PANNEL WITH KATSUHIRO OTOMO, MARK DIPPE, JERRY BECK and others guests at the Academy Of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Samuel Goldwyn Theatre on Wednesday, November 14th. The evening event will include 35mm clips from some of the greatest anime films past and present. The panel, still being finalized, will include **Katsuhiro Otomo** (*Akira*), **Mark Dippe** (from San Francisco, director of the live action *Spawn*, and Jerry Beck (author, researcher and former anime distributor). www.cartoonresearch.com

"NEW YORK TIMES" RAN AN ANALYSIS OF WHY DISNEY STOCK HAS LOST VALUE The basic theme of the article is that a lot of Disney's income comes from areas that have slowed down this year (travel, advertising and retail), and since the events of Sept. 11, things have gotten worse for those areas. Right now a lot of people are avoiding theme parks, hotels and Disney cruise ships. Since people are spending less, companies are pulling back on their TV advertising budgets. Disney's ABC network is plugging the theme parks in some of the unsold air time.

It also didn't build confidence in Disney stock when the Bass family of Texas sold \$2 billion of Disney stock to cover their losses on telecommunications holdings that they bought on margin. Putting over 5% of the company stock up for sale at once gets noticed. In the 2nd week of September, just as terrorists struck, Disney went another billion in debt to buy back a billion bucks of the stock once owned by the Bass family. The corporation now has a \$16 billion debt, the largest it has ever been. The 2 page article appeared Sunday, September 23 on the front page of the *NY Times*'s business section. Note: by mid-October the value of Disney stock was heading up again. It was close to \$20 after reaching a low of \$15.50 a share. The 52 week high was \$42 a share.

BOOKS AND RECORDS



NEW DUMBO DVD WITH EXTRAS FROM DISNEY IS NOW AVAILABLE. ALSO PIXAR'S "TOY STORY," "TOY STORY 2," "BUGS LIFE" AND "GERI'S GAME" IS AVAILABLE AS A DVD SET The *Dumbo* package also includes the shorts *Elmer Elephant* and *The Flying Mouse*, plus a sneak preview of *DUMBO 2*, a direct to video feature.

READ *How to Succeed in Animation, Don't Let a Little Thing Like Failure Bother You* by Gene Deitch at www.awn.com In October they posted the chapters on Deitch's *Charlotte's Web* project that died. The rights were taken from Deitch and ended up with Hanna-Barbera. They added songs that E.B White and Deitch hated and a script that didn't please them. It is a heavily documented section of his book. There are lots of original letters reproduced that explain what happened. It makes great reading if you like knowing about how corrupt and rotten the movie industry can be. Deitch was courted so they could rip-off his screen rights to the book. White, the author of the book, was ripped-off too. H-B pretended to respect him when they consulted with him, but they apparently didn't use any of his suggestions. AWN's publishing Deitch's book is a valuable use of the Internet



ANIMATION IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC" IS AN IMPORTANT BOOK THAT COVERS A LOT MORE THAN ANIME Edited by John A. Lent, 2001, John Libbey Publishing, Indiana University Press in the US, 280 pages, loaded with b/w and color illustrations.

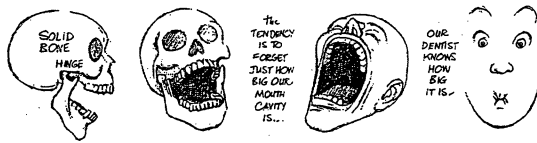
Lent, who teaches at Temple University, has edited several scholarly volumes. His latest is a remarkable survey of the diverse types of animation being produced in China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, India, Taiwan, Indonesia and other countries. The 15 contributing authors have provided easy to read chapters that seem well researched. There are ample footnotes and bibliographies at the end of chapters. Supporting visuals range from production stills and preliminary drawings to ads for films and photos of several of the animators.

Fans of anime will probably pass on this book as it isn't full of trivia about their favorite obscure films. Instead it is a solid survey of historical and contemporary developments and trends. There are chapters as diverse as "The History of Malaysian Animated Cartoons," "Overseas Animation Production in Asia" and "Anime in the United States."

A look at the chapter "Australian and New Zealand Animation" introduced me to the work of Eric Porter "who was the most significant Australian animator in the pre-television era and he would become a cornerstone of the industry when television broadcasts began." This is followed by a solid discussion of Porter's work and work by many other artists. There are separate sections in the chapter on animation for TV, "Hanna-Barbera in Australia," animated features from the region, independent animation, "Women in Australian animation" and "The Contemporary Industry."

I assume a lot of libraries will acquire the book as it is not only the first reference book on the subject, it is also well researched and written. It is not only a concise record, it is also attractive, nicely illustrated and it has an inviting cover. Hopefully better bookstores will stock it. KC

RHINO RECORDS HAS RELEASED "THAT'S ALL FOLKS!" featuring classic songs from Merrie Melodies & Looney Tunes cartoons. Enjoy Bugs' rendition of *I Love to Singa*, and Daffy singing *The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down*. Includes the complete soundtrack to 6 cartoons - *What's Opera Doc*, *Three Little Bops* (performed by Stan Freeberg and Shorty Rogers), *Have You Got Any Castles?*, *Book Revue*, *Katnip Kollege* and *Back Alley Uproar* plus lots of other musical delights.



RELEASE DATE OF RICHARD WILLIAMS' BOOK HAS BEEN CHANGED It is now March 15, 2002. He hopes to do a book signing tour of the U.S.A. at that time.

"WALT DISNEY'S NINE OLD MEN AND THE ART OF ANIMATION," IS A NEW BOOK BY JOHN CANEMAKER Book signings, lectures, and screenings were held at New York's Museum of Modern Art and New York University in October. This is Canemaker's 8th book on animation history. He is one of America's most respected animation historians. Once more he brings a high level of historical detail, analysis, and candor to his text as he offers us an intimate biographical glimpse at the art and lives of Walt Disney's core group of animators. The men studied include Les Clark, Wolfgang Reitherman, Eric Larson, Ward Kimball, Milt Kahl, Frank Thomas, Ollie Johnston, John Lounsbery, and Marc Davis.

The book is oversized (9" by 12"), 310 pages and is lavishly illustrated in color with original animation art, film frames, stills and family photographs. The publisher is Disney Editions, NYC. Canemaker's earlier books include *Winsor McCay*; *Felix - The Twisted Tale of the World's Most Famous Cat*; *Tex Avery -- The MGM Years*; *Before the Animation Begins* and *Paper Dreams*.

OBITUARIES

POLISH ANIMATOR JAN LENICA DIES by Chris Robinson After battling a lengthy illness, the legendary Polish animator and artist, Jan Lenica died on October 5, 2001 in Berlin. He was 73 years old. Jan Lenica was born in 1928 in Poznan, Poland. He studied architecture at the Technical University of Warsaw. After leaving Poland, he moved to Paris and later to the U.S., where in 1974 he became a professor at Harvard University in Cambridge. In 1979 Lenica became the head of the animated films department at the University of Kassel in Germany. After leaving the University he remained in Germany, giving lectures in Berlin at Hochschule der Künste between 1986 and 1994. He remained in Berlin until his death.

Lenica is best known for his black animation comedies, *Monsieur Tete*, *Adam 2*, *Rhinoceros*, *Labyrinth* and *A*, which explore the conflict of individuals struggling to express themselves within a stifling bureaucratic and violent world. Lenica was also famous throughout the art world for his unique film posters.

His films and art have been exhibited throughout the world. He has been the subject of numerous articles and two documentaries. He was recently a guest of the Ottawa International Animation Festival, which held a retrospective of his films and an exhibition of his poster art in September 2000. Lenica had been at work on his first film in over twenty years when he died.

Contributed by Chris Robinson, Ottawa, Canada. He edits our ASIFA International newsletter, runs a few festival,

writes for AWN.COM under the name "Animation Pimp" and does other cool things.)

A PERSONAL REMEMBRANCE OF JAN LENICA by Prescott J. Wright Another world famous animator passed away a few weeks ago; Jan Lenica (pronounced Jan Len-itza). He was born in Poznan, Poland in 1928. During his youth he witnessed war and political changes in Europe. He completed his education at the acclaimed Art Institute of Poland and the Communist government funded his first films. Unlike the U.S., cartoons were made in Europe and elsewhere for adults, not just for children with some appeal for adults.

Many of his films derived their plots from the work of modern philosophers and new studies of psychology. This was Lenica's meat. He loved converting wild ideas about people and their lives into visual stories, although they would sometimes stretch into the bizarre in such as the films *A*, *Rhinoceros* and *Mssr. Tete*. He often used grotesque images and the cut-out technique. That became the trademark for his work and that of his buddy Walerian Borczyk. When it became risky to be in Poland, he left for France.

I had good fortune to meet Jan at an early Annecy Animation Festival, and again at the 2000 Ottawa Animation Festival, where he was honored. He did not remember me from the earlier meeting. He had slowed down considerably in his responses though they were always thoughtful. He had little patience for those who had not studied his work which often took several screenings to fathom.

His work was inspired by the writing of Romanian playwright Eugene Ionescu, who was also an expatriate in France. It was Ionescu's play *A* which inspired Lenica's film *A*. The plot was the tyranny of words depicted as a large letter A which intruded into a man's household and refused to leave.

In his later years, he moved to the U.S., but he only found funding for one more film project. In despair of not getting funds, he and his Finnish wife moved to Berlin where he made a living illustrating books. He was joined there by the great Yugoslavian animator Nedeljko Dragic, who went there as the war in his homeland deepened.

Lenica's passing was a loss for all of us. He was a master of story, design, character development, and timing. His works were not simple cartoons, but were complex fine art films. He will be missed by his friend and those who enjoyed his work. We can honor his contributions and his life by exhibiting his films, if we can find them. I hope that someone will build a small library of his work before his films get lost forever. If you know of such a library please let me to care of ASIFA-San Francisco. **Prescott Wright, president emeritus.**

COMPUTER GRAPHICS PIONEER ROBERT ABEL DIES. After an illustrious career in visual effects spanning more than 30 years, computer graphics pioneer Robert Abel passed away on Sunday, September 23, 2001.

Animator Scott Kravitz worked with Able and wrote the following: "Before joining Bob Abel at Synapse Technologies I had been aware of only a few of his achievements- the CG commercials with the Sexy Robot and the walking Levi's logo that featured the Candy Apple Neon

technique. Yet the work Bob Abel had taken on at that moment was an educational project about the quintcentennial of Christopher Columbus's arrival in America. It was to be stored and accessed on laser discs in a multi-media format never before seen. It was 1990 and CD-ROMs hadn't yet been introduced and the word "interactive" was just becoming a buzz word.

I was hired as Bob Abel's personal assistant. The list of people who have passed through his employ is astounding. Visual effects supervisors such as Con Pederson (*2001: A Space Odyssey*), John Nelson (*Gladiator*), Rob Legato (*Titanic*) and Charles Gibson (*Babe*) were all mentored by him early in their careers. Grateful to be part of this list I had wanted to make a good impression on Mr. Abel. I let my mother pick out my outfit for my first day at work, and it turned out to be exactly the same thing that Bob was wearing. As he introduced me to the other employees I must have looked like the biggest sycophant in the world. If Bob had noticed, he didn't mention it.

Few people truly fit the label of "visionary." Bob did. At age 24 he was a key designer of the 1962 World's Fair Pavilion exhibit "The New Age of Science," and two years later, for the IBM Science Pavilion "A View From the People Wall." Meanwhile, he was making documentaries such as *The Making of a Presiden*" (for which he won an Emmy) and *Joe Cocker: Mad Dogs and Englishmen*.

In 1971 he formed Robert Abel and Associates and changed the effects industry with the first motion-control camera (for which he shared a Scientific and Technical Oscar). Later he worked extensively in raster graphics as Abel Image Research, a division of RA&A. They gave birth to computer graphics as we know them today.

For those who want to understand his genius, I can describe his office - tall stacks of papers arranged across the floor like buildings in a miniature city. Navigating one's way from the door to his desk required a different route each day. One of the producers once took me aside to warn that I should never rearrange the piles. Bob had an order to the papers that only he knew.

He seemed to think out loud, often using a tape recorder in lieu of notes. He used speaker phones so he could leave his hands free to work his highlighter across pages of text. He rarely took a lunch break.

As Eisenstein did with the montage, Bob did with information. A person using his program begins researching one topic and discovers surprising connections to seemingly unrelated subjects, resulting in an awareness that didn't exist before. This kind of serendipity was not something most people had associated with computers, but now take for granted with the Internet. Following one idea leads to another unexpectedly, in a process without end, and the only constant is the one who explores. So he conducted his life."

Scott Kravitz is a stop-motion and computer animator in San Francisco. He is currently working on *Phantom Investigators* for Wholesome Products.

SHOPPING TIP - AMAZON.COM IS SELLING RICHARD WILLIAMS' YET TO BE RELEASED BOOK AT 30% OFF. THEY OFFER THE SAME DISCOUNT ON JOHN CANEMAKER'S NEW BOOK



THE KROK INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL IS UNLIKE ANY OTHER

by Nik and Nancy Phelps

Last year Nina Paley attended Krok and told us it was a fabulous experience. She submitted *Fetch* this year, it was accepted, but at the last moment she couldn't attend the two week event that takes place on a cruise ship. Since Nik had composed the music and the Sprocket Ensemble had performed the score for her film, we were invited to represent the film.

Two weeks before the event we received our formal invitations to attend, so it was a rush to get our visa from the Ukrainian Embassy. We flew into Kiev, met with some of the international attendees and at midnight we took Mr. Toad's wild ride to Odessa. On the morning of August 20th we boarded the T. S. Shevchenko where we spent the next two weeks in the company of 200 people from all over the world watching and discussing animation.

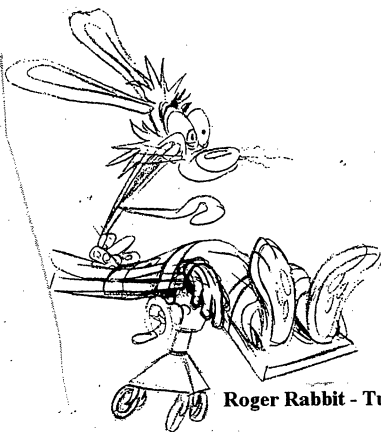
The attendees bring all types of interests and knowledge to the festival. There were artists, composers, animation teachers, and even Felinni's script writer. Every day from 9 in the morning until 2 in the afternoon we would watch the competition screenings as we sailed across the Black Sea and up the Dnieper River to Kiev. At 2 we had lunch. In the afternoon there were optional screenings including a fine program of animated Oscar-winners. There were also group excursions when we were in port. For example, in Yalta we went to a royal residence. In Herson we were taken by a small boat to a tiny village where we ate a fabulous meal prepared by local grandmothers.

In the evening there were informational programs. One of the interesting features of the festival was seeing an evenings presentation by each competition juror. That way we got an idea of the taste and style of each juror. When the winners were announced on the final night it helped you understand the judges choices.

Another evening highlight was a presentation of award winning films from the Annecy Animation Festival. At 10 p.m. the screening room on the ship was turned into a disco and we danced the night away (sometimes until 5 am which made getting to the 9 am screening more of a challenge). Several times during voyage there were talent shows and one night there was a costumed Mardi Gras. Lest the trip sounds too academic, there was plenty of time for shopping in port, for sightseeing and of course great amounts of beer, wine and vodka for all.

The quality of the animation was consistently high and represented a wide variety of techniques and styles. It was really wonderful to have the opportunity to spend two weeks getting to know the other animators. After seeing their work you had several chances to talk about it with them.

ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO PRESENTS



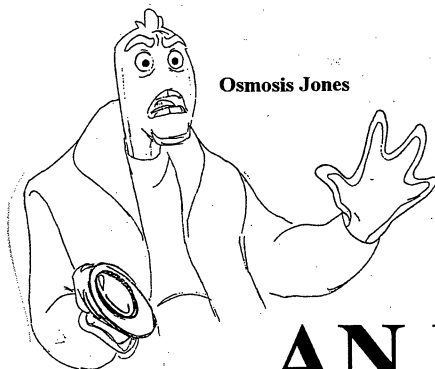
Roger Rabbit - Tummy Trouble



The Lion King



Beauty and the Beast



Osmosis Jones



Shrek

AN EVENING WITH TOM SITO

Tom Sito has been called “one of the key players in the
Disney Animation Revival” (*Animation World Network*, January, 2001)

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 7, 7:30 PM

AT THE EXPLORATORIUM, free, public invited

Tom Sito has been working in the industry for 26 years. He recently co-directed Warner Bros.' *Osmosis Jones*. His Disney screen credits include *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty & The Beast*, *Aladdin*, *The Lion King*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, *Pocahontas*, *Fantasia 2000* and *Dinosaurs*. In 1995 he left a Disney directorship post to help set up the Dreamworks Animation unit. At Dreamworks he recruited and trained staff and worked on *Shrek*, *The Prince Of Egypt*, *Antz*, *Spirit Of The Cimmarron* and other projects. Prior to joining Disney he directed 22 hours of Saturday morning TV shows (*Fat Albert*, *She-Ra*, etc.) and numerous commercials. He also worked as an animator on *City Slickers* (title sequence) and the Emmy winner *Ziggy's Gift*, 1982.

His personal work includes the beautifully animated and politically poignant *Propagandance* (*Animation Celebration*, Vol. 2). He teaches at the University of Southern California and California Institute of the Arts, has written numerous articles about animation, and has lectured at NYU, SVA, UCLA, AFI, Microsoft, Sheridan College and other institutions.

Sito has been President of the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists' Union Local 839 for many years. He has been a vice president of ASIFA-Hollywood and is a member of the Motion Picture Academy, the National Cartoonists Society and Hollywood Heritage.

In 1998 Tom Sito was added to *Animation Magazine's* list of
“The 100 Most Important People in Animation.”

The opening night ceremony took place at a brand new theater in Odessa and the closing night award ceremony took place at the Artists' Building which is the festival headquarters in Kiev.

The festival committee is trying to encourage more participation from the West. This year lots of awards went to non-eastern block works. This year's jury didn't seem to have an appreciation for flash animation or low resolution computer generated work (*For the Bird* from Pixar won an award, so they enjoyed high-end work).

The festival is jointly sponsored by the Filmmakers' Union of Russia and Filmmakers' Union of Ukraine. Next year the festival will cruise from St. Petersburg to Moscow and will be open only to student films. In 2003 the festival will return to the Ukraine and will be open to all works.

I hope in the future many Bay Area animators will submit work to the Krok International Animation Festival and attend and share the experience. It was one of the best times Nik and I have ever had. We encourage people to talk to us about our Krok experience.

PS, It costs \$500 US to attend if your work is in the festival and \$1000 for others for two weeks on board with 3 meals a day!

Nik Phelps is a composer and the leader of the Sprocket Ensemble. Nancy is the Sprocket Ensemble's producer.

Nik and Nancy by the steps used in *Potemkin*. They are in Odessa on the Black Sea.



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John Peterson
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This issue was written by Karl Cohen, Articles were contributed by Prescott Wright, Chris Robinson, Scott Kravitz and Nik and Nancy Phelps. Laura Tulloss was the layout artist and Pete Davis proof read it. Shirley Smith, Ron Seawright, Tara Packard and Nik and Nancy mailed it to you. Non-members? Join for only \$22 a year. Send a check to the above address.

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FESTIVALS

NASHVILLE INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL

December 21, Feb. 1 early deadline, \$30 fee, \$35 late fee. June 5-9 event. Brian Gordon, who did a fine job running the Golden Gate Awards in SF for many years, is now this festival's director. Festival has a long history of doing a good job supporting independent film/animation. Shows 16mm, 35mm, Beta and Digital Beta. Previews in 1/2" VHS. Animation category. For form, NIFF PO Box 24330, Nashville TN 37202-4330 (615) 742-2500 www.nashvillefilmfestival.org

BLACK MARIA FESTIVAL DEADLINE IS NOV. 20

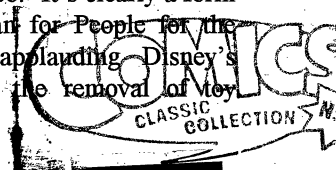
They include several animated personal films each year. Kathy Geritz, a curator at the PFA, is a judge this year. Cash prizes, \$35 entry fee, tour. They do not return 1/2" tapes. New Jersey City University, Fries Hall - MA 112, 2039 Kennedy Blvd. Jersey City NJ 07305 www.blackmariafilmfestival.com

QUESTION:

HAS DISNEY MADE THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE TO LIVE?

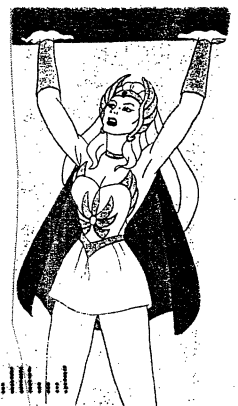
You can forget about the dangers of the world on your next trip to Disneyland. The *San Francisco Examiner* on Sept. 4 announced on the front page in 2" headlines that the park had disarmed their evil pirates. Yes, no more cap pistols tucked under their belts!

The next day Rob Morse wrote on p. 2 of the *Chronicle*, "Disneyland has disarmed the skippers on the Jungle Cruise ride. They can no longer take those dramatic shots with blanks at the mechanical hippo. It's clearly a form of animal cruelty," said a spokeswoman for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals in applauding Disney's disarmament, which extends even to the removal of toy flintlocks from Frontierland.



She-Ra by Tom Sito

Meet him at our Nov. 7 event.

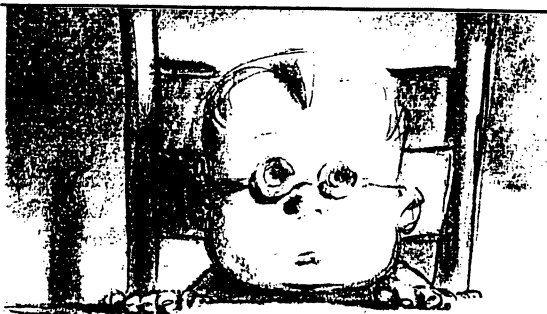


ASIFA

SAN FRANCISCO

The International Film Association
P.O. Box 14516 • San Francisco, CA 94114

DECEMBER, 2001



Hubert's Brain - Best Theatrical Short

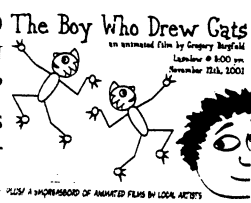
CONGRATULATIONS TO PDI FOR WINNING 8 ANNIE AWARDS FOR "SHREK" INCLUDING BEST FEATURE, AND TO WILD BRAIN FOR WINNING 3 ANNIE AWARDS INCLUDING THE BEST THEATRICAL SHORT AND THE BEST INTERNET SHORT The 29th Annual Annie Award nominees were chosen from eligible entries by nominating committees appointed by the Board of Directors of ASIFA-Hollywood. Nominations were announced on September 10, 2001 and were mentioned in our October newsletter. Members of ASIFA-Hollywood voted on the nominations and the winners were announced November 10, 2001.

The Bay Area won over 1/3 of the awards presented this year. The local winners are:

- OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN AN ANIMATED THEATRICAL FEATURE, *Shrek* - PDI/DreamWorks
- OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT FOR AN ANIMATED PRODUCTION PRODUCED FOR THE INTERNET, *Grove Monkee* - Wild Brain, Inc.
- OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN AN ANIMATED SHORT SUBJECT, *Hubert's Brain* - Wild Brain, Inc.
- OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN AN ANIMATED SPECIAL PROJECT, *The Chuck Jones Show: Open/Close/Packaging* - Wild Brain, Inc. for Cartoon Network
- OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT FOR EFFECTS ANIMATION, Arnauld Lamorlette - *Shrek*
- OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT FOR DIRECTING IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE PRODUCTION, Andrew Adamson, Vicky Jenson - *Shrek*
- OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT FOR MUSIC SCORE IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE PRODUCTION, John Powell, Harry Gregson-Williams, *Shrek*
- OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT FOR PRODUCTION DESIGN IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE PRODUCTION, Guillaume Aretos, *Shrek*
- OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT FOR STORYBOARDING IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE PRODUCTION, Robert Koo, *Shrek*
- OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT FOR WRITING IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE PRODUCTION, Ted Elliott, Terry Rossio, Joe Stillman, Roger S.H. Schulman, *Shrek*
- OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT FOR VOICE ACTING BY A MALE PERFORMER IN AN ANIMATED FEATURE PRODUCTION Eddie Murphy as the voice of Donkey, *Shrek*

SPROCKET ENSEMBLE IS PERFORMING WITH A LOT OF ANIMATION NOT PREVIOUSLY SEEN IN THE BAY AREA - MORE NEW WORK WILL BE SHOWN ON DECEMBER 18 Their November show at the Red Vic featured 13 works that had not been shown in our city before. They came from Russia, Ukraine, Sweden, Portugal and the US. Many were acquired on Nik and Nancy Phelps' recent trip to Europe and the Krok festival. Nancy says the December program will feature a Christmas message from the Ukraine that is not to be missed, plus a sneak preview of a work-in-progress about a lost sock by ASIFA-SF's Shirley Smith. Shows at 7:30 and 9:30 pm.

ANIMATOR GREG BIRGFELD CELEBRATED THE COMPLETION OF "THE BOY WHO DREW CATS" IN NOVEMBER Dinghy Productions and Velvendo Films held a party in honor of Birgfeld at Laszlow on Mission (next door to Foreign Cinema). They showed his new film based on a folktale plus "a smorgasbord of animated films by local artists." Ken Kearny created the music. Andrea Gard designed the sound and Anna Marie Vavloukis was the producer.



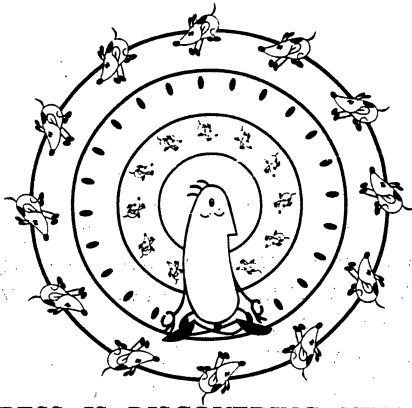
NEWS OF BILLY GREENE'S MURDER CONTINUES TO BE COVERED BY ANIMATION PUBLICATIONS

The murder of this very talented young animator must have meaning to a lot of people who never knew him. Obituaries have recently appeared in Film Art Foundation's *Release Print*, in the animation union's newsletter, on-line at AWN.COM and I assume in other publications. When I reflect on what happened to Billy I'm motivated to try and complete my objectives and to live life as fully as possible as I know time runs out... KC

...AND BILLY GREENE'S FILM WINS ANOTHER MAJOR FESTIVAL PRIZE

Jean Thomas, the director of photography of Billy Greene's last film writes, "*Thought Bubble* won the Animation Award in NYC at the Shorts International Film Festival and is now eligible for the Academy. Exciting! We added an ending about Billy, so audiences know about what happened and can get more information from his website." www.blackvan.net

BARBARA KLUTINIS, who headed the Rooftop Elementary Middle School animation program and teaches film at Skyline College, has a 16mm, optically printed experimental film that is getting into several festivals and winning a few prizes. *Journey, Swiftly Passing* won Second Place in the Athens Film and Video Festival and honorable mentions at the Marin County Fair Film and Video Festival and the New Jersey International Film Festival. It has been shown in the Exploratorium's Electric Shadows series and by the S.F. Cinematheque at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.



THE PRESS IS DISCOVERING NINA PALEY The September issue of *Millimeter* has a half page article about her using Flash to make *Fetch* and why the piece could be turned into a sharp looking 35mm film. The November issue of *Release Print* has her work on their cover and an article about her inside. The November issue of *Animation World Magazine* (at awn.com) has an article on innovative animation techniques. The entire first page of that article is about Paley's work!

Kristinna McCort in *Millimeter* calls her work "Escheresque." She interviewed Paley about why she used Flash to make *Fetch*. She also quoted Haunt Rama of Monaco Labs about why Flash animation looks so good in 35mm. Flash is a vector graphic system and since it doesn't use pixels it is easy to blow up straight or curved lines and get great results.

Nina told us she had plans to transfer her Flash work to 35mm when she made *Fetch* so she did one more thing that the article left out. She created it at 24 images a second on the computer. Most Flash animation is intended to be seen on computer screens, so it is made at 8, 10 or 12 frames a second. Also, the simplicity of most Internet animation will look clumsy if it were blown up and projected in 35mm on a big screen. *Fetch* had more refined images.

I had the pleasure of seeing *Fetch* at the Castro on their giant screen and it looked great. The images were sharp and crisp. There was nothing that suggested to me that it was made using Flash.

Nina told Joan Kim from awn.com "I love trying new techniques. I'm strictly limited by budget constraints, which is a drag, but it also drives me to find creative production methods. If I had to make my films the 'correct' way, they'd never get done." The article mentions her 70mm film *Pandorama* as well as her works *Fetch* and *Cancer*.

Nina continues to produce strong personal work. In November she premiered *The Stork* and *Fertility Goddess* at the Red Vic (Sprocket Ensemble show). Both are good looking 3 minute works with strong messages. Her Goddess demonstrates her powers, but unfortunately she is too skilled with them and the results are disastrous. *The Stork* uses a lot of humor to make its point.

Nina is presently working on an ambitious project that is part animation and part live action documentary footage. Liz Canning's excellent 3 page story on her career in Film Art's *Release Print* says *Thank You For Not Breeding* will be a documentary about overpopulation and the environment. It will include at least 10 minutes of various kinds of animation, plus time lapse photography and talking heads.

ASIFA NEEDS A VOLUNTEER WHO CAN BACK-UP PHILIP MALKIN WHO PRINTS OUT OUR MAILING LABELS Malkin is enjoying "extended travels in the Mediteranian." His trip began in early November and he will be back in mid-December. ASIFA will need somebody to help out if he continues his travels next year. He might have to leave late this month or in January. To ensure there is no interruption in the delivery of newsletters, ASIFA-SF needs to plan ahead "just in case."

At present our database is kept in File Maker Pro, but Malkin can export our database to another program. The mailing list/label tasks do not require a lot of time each month (mainly adding new members, changes of address and printing out labels) but they do require accuracy and being able to get the labels to us in time for our mailing crew to do their job. If you can be of help, please contact Karl Cohen (415) 386-1004 karlcohen@earthlink.net Please contact us right away.

TARA PACKARD'S ART FEATURED IN "PC GAME NEWS" an online publication. In October they ran an advanced mention of a new product from Maxis. The article about Sim's Hot Date featured 4 frames from the game that were animated by Packard. The animated segment showed a couple getting ready to snuggle on a red couch.

LUCAS HAS GIVEN THE WORLD BRIEF LOOKS AT "STAR WARS: EPISODE II - ATTACK OF THE CLONES" WITH TRAILERS PACKAGED WITH PRINTS OF "MONSTERS, INC." AND "HARRY POTTER" Lucasfilm Ltd. created a "teaser" trailer for *Star Wars: Episode II -- Attack of the Clones* that is packaged with prints of *Monsters, Inc.* and a 2-minute preview packaged with *Harry Potter*. There is also a promo in Quick Time on the Internet.

George Lucas commented in October. "I have great respect for Pixar and deep admiration for John Lasseter and his team. I'm thrilled to be able to show audiences their first glimpse of *Episode II* with *Monsters, Inc.* It gives me an immense sense of pride to see our companies working together."

A VOICE FROM THE PAST "There may be a lot coming up that could affect the way special effects are done. I just don't know what they're going to call it---maybe a 'video-graphic' computer. You will be able to do a computer-created, entirely synthetic image and animate with that image." Dennis Muren of ILM, *Millimeter*, September, 1980.

THE NOVEMBER-DECEMBER ISSUE OF FILM ARTS' "RELEASE PRINT" HAS SEVERAL FINE ANIMATION ARTICLES IN IT The cover story is on Nina Paley. There is an informative article on doing effects with Adobe After Effects, interviews with Danny Plotnick, Lena Podesta, Samara Halperin and Amy Hicks and a review of RESFest 2001. Their new editor is animation friendly. The issue uses more images from films and cool graphics and fewer cocktail party photos.



DO YOU HAVE AN ANIMATED WORK TO SHOW AT OUR JANUARY OPEN SCREENING FOR STUDENTS AND INDEPENDENT ANIMATORS? If so, let Karl Cohen know about the work ASAP and your name and the work's title will be on our flyer for the Wed., Jan. 16 event. (415) 386-1004 Our open screening for animation companies will be on Feb. 20

PIXAR'S "MONSTERS" BREAKS A RECORD It opened in the number one spot with a weekend gross of \$63.5 million, the biggest opening ever for an animated film. By the end of its 2nd weekend it had grossed \$123 million. By the end of 3 weekends the gross was \$156 million (excellent, even though *Harry Potter*, with effects by ILM, had become "the film" to see). On 11/25 the gross was almost \$193 million. Considering it will probably be on the top 10 charts until after the 1st of the new year, I wonder how long it will take it to gross \$300 million?

PDI/DREAMWORK'S "SHREK" IS BREAKING SALES RECORDS TOO "*Shrek*" is the top grossing theatrical movie of the year (\$267.5 million domestic). It has also broken the DVD sales record by selling 2.2 million copies in one week. (*Star Wars: Episode 1* sold 2 million the first week). *Shrek* sold over 7 million VHS and DVD units in just three days of its release (about \$110 million).

This will be a big year for DVD. The DVD releases of *Star Wars: Episode 1*, *Snow White* and *Mummy Returns* set sales records that *Shrek* broke. Big box office films coming out in DVD before Christmas include *Pearl Harbor*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Tomb Raider*, *Jurassic Park III* and *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

DREAMWORKS ANNOUNCES ANDREW ADAMSON, CO-DIRECTOR OF "SHREK" WILL DIRECT "TRUCKERS" AWN.COM reports this will be a part-live action, part-animated feature based on a young adult novel by Terry Pratchett. The story is about alien creatures who live in a department store. Adamson is writing the film's script with Joe Stillman, a co-author of *Shrek*. Adamson is also expected to be involved in some way with the *Shrek* sequel.

Vicky Jenson, who co-directed *Shrek* with Adamson, will not work on the sequel. She is slated to direct an upcoming DreamWorks CG project that has yet to be announced.

It isn't clear if either or both films will be animated in Palo Alto by PDI as Dreamworks also produces animation in LA (and in England with Aardman). PDI is known to be working on *Tusker* (2002 release), *Madagascar* and *Shrek 2*.

THE IMAX VERSION OF DISNEY'S "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST" LOOKS AND SOUNDS FANTASTIC It opens January 1 at Lowes' IMAX at Metreon in SF. Seeing the new print created for the 70mm format at a preview demonstrated how wonderful film's magic can be. OK, I'm both an animation and a 70mm junkie. For me, seeing a sharp, brilliant image that big and colors that rich and pure was a remarkable experience. The animation moved smoothly 99.9% of the time and the digital ink and paint showed no trace of imperfections despite it being blown up on a screen

70 or 80' high. If you enjoy the IMAX experience, make sure you see this presentation when it opens, even if you are not a big fan of this film.

An aside: After Tom Sito's talk people asked me what his job was on this film. He was one of 6 animators given credit for creating the beast.



Numerous essays can be written about the merits and faults of Disney features. Many people dislike them and their reasons generally make a lot of sense. I much prefer Jean Cocteau's 1948 black and white version of *Beauty and the Beast*, and love showing my 16mm print of it to friends. Even so, I believe that if you can put aside any negative feelings you might have about Disney for 85 minutes, you will have a magical experience.

I hope you leave totally charmed and delighted with the presentation. Sure I was being manipulated, I disagreed with some elements of the story and I am not a fan of the soundtrack, but I still marveled at the art and labor the studio put into the production. While some of us might have been happier if it was *Shrek*, a different Disney feature, a Svankmajer film or Nina Paley's IMAX short *Pandorama* that will be opening in IMAX on January 1, the reality is this is the best animated IMAX experience we are going to get for some time, so enjoy it.

LOCAL SCREENINGS

Thurs. Nov. 29 through Monday, December 3, at the Red Vic. SF Premiere of **SPRIGGAN**, from Japan, dubbed, 90 minutes. "The action scenes absolutely rule" *Ain't It Cool News*; "Visionary" London Film Festival.

Wednesday, December 19, 7:30 pm, ASIFA-SF PRESENTS A SCREENING OF RARELY SEEN ANIMATED CLASSICS, 16mm program of artistic triumphs including *Mindscape*, a pinscreen film by Jacques Drouin, Canada; Hoppin and Gross, *Le Joie de Vivre (The Joy of Living/Life)*, a celebration of life in modern France, 1934; Ub Iwerks' *Merry Manequins*, an Art Deco masterpiece, 1937, work by Raoul Servais, Paul Driessen and much more. At the Exploratorium

December 26-30. Wed. - Sunday, at noon, 2 and 4 pm. **HOLIDAY ANIMATION PROGRAM** at the Exploratorium. Includes *Bunny* by Chris Wedge, *Tin Toy* by John Lasseter, *Infinite Escher* by Mary Perillo and John Sanborn and *Tops* by Charles and Ray Eames.

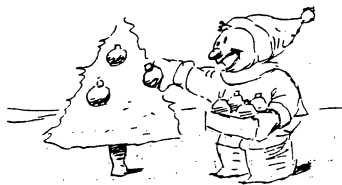
Opening January 1 at the Lowes/Sony Metreon IMAX. Disney's **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST**.

NATIONAL NEWS

WALT WOULD HAVE BEEN 100 ON DECEMBER 5, SO ROBIN ALLEN HAS ORGANIZED A WORLD WIDE TOAST TO HONOR HIS MEMORY He e-mailed a long list of friends, scholars, retired Disney artists, etc. "to raise a glass and toast the memory of Walt Disney at 8pm British time (9pm European time, 12 noon US Pacific time)."

Other events on Dec. 5 include The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Science in LA presenting a tribute to Walt at 8 pm.

SNOWBALLS



Cecil the Snowman Falls in Love



by Bill Plympton

BY BILL PLYMPTON

BILL PLYMPTON HAS CREATED A 22 MINUTE LONG CHRISTMAS SPECIAL FOR THE CARTOON NETWORK! *12 Tiny Christmas Tales* premieres on Cartoon Network, Friday, December 7th at 8:30 pm. It will also run on Friday, December 21 at 9:30 pm. The tales are based on Christmas cards that Bill has made over the years. Bill told us working with Linda Simensky of the network "was a dream. The only restriction was make it funny." ASIFA-East is holding a preview party featuring a band and a screening of this work.

Clips of Bill's work and an interview with him were seen on PBS in *The Egg*, an experimental series. There was a 4 or 5 min. segment on his work in the "Body Parts" show.

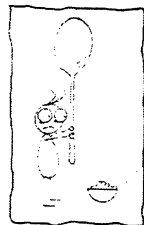
"THE DON AND BILL SHOW: SLIGHTLY BENT" COULD BECOME AN UNDERGROUND HIT

It features 10 animated shorts by two Oscar nominated artists who are the backbone of recent Spike and Mike shows. Apollo Cinema in the San Diego area has packaged 5 shorts by Bill Plympton with 5 by Don Hertzfeldt. Films include Plympton's *Your Face*, *Eat*, *Surprise Cinema*, *25 Ways to Quit Smoking* and *More Sex and Violence*. Hertzfeldt's five are *Rejected*, *Ah L'Amour*, *Lilly and Jim*, *Billy's Balloon* and *Genre*. The package opened for a 4 day midnight run in September in LA ("a terrific program of 10 provocative works" *LA Times*) and was back in another LA theater in November. Bill was flown to the Austin, Texas



Eat!

premiere in November at the Alamo Drafthouse and said they not only packed the place, they had to turn over 200 people away. One person told him it was the best show he had ever seen! Another friend who just happened to be there confirms it was a cool event and you can drink beer and eat pizza while watching the films.



Rejected Apollo's web says the show is booked into the Charles in Baltimore, Md.; the St. Louis Film Festival and Coolidge Corner near Bostin. . apollocinema.com

MILESTONE RELEASES A VIDEOTAPE OF JOHN CAINMAKER'S WORK

The *NY Times* reports "*John Canemaker: Marching to a Different Toon* is a compendium of shorts by this animator, writer and educator. Mr. Canemaker's quirky, highly transformative figures go well with humorous riffs by actors and comedians, and they are effective in shorts and in longer films about child abuse, AIDS and other serious subjects." For info. (800) 603-1104.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE, WWW.ASIFA-SF.ORG

THE FIRST OSCAR FOR AN ANIMATED FEATURE HAS 13 HOPEFULS IN THE RACE In late October it looked like there wouldn't be enough entries entered to have an animated category, but as the November entry deadline neared 13 films were entered. AWN writes, "The submitted films will be reviewed by the executive committee of the Short Films and Feature Animation branch, which will make its recommendations to the Board of Governors who will ultimately determine whether or not an award will be handed out in the Animated Feature film category. The Board will meet on December 11th to make the decision."

The Academy defines an animated feature as "a motion picture of at least 70 minutes in running time where a significant number of the major characters in the film are animated (stop-motion, CGI or traditional), and animation figures in no less than 75% of the picture's running time." AWN reports "This definition seems to have foiled at least one potential contender, *Blood: The Last Vampire*. It is only 50 minutes long, but it has played theatrically in Japan and the U.S. and Manga feels it should qualify as an animated feature. It is the first all digital feature from Japan.

ONE OF DISNEY'S SUPRESSED WWII FILMS CAN BE SEEN ON THE INTERNET

Education for Death was made for our government during WWII. I recall it being a rather nasty film about Hitler brainwashing the youth of Germany. See it at ifilm.com (I tried, but I didn't have all the required software in my computer. I downloaded one program and was then told I needed another, so I turned it off.)

RUMOR OF THE MONTH Disney refused to confirm that they were adopting *Beauty and The Beast* for IMAX theaters until the last moment. Now, the same people who told me that was happening before Disney confirmed that rumor, are saying *The Lion King* will be the next 70mm Disney release.

WHY DISNEY IS RELEASING FILMS IN 70MM IMAX I

just found a list of IMAX movie box office statistics for the US which explain why Disney and IMAX are interested in working together. The top grossing film in IMAX is *Everest* (1998) at \$76.5 million. Number 2 on the list is *Fantasia 2000* at \$51.3 million. *Mysteries of Egypt* is #3 at \$40.8 million and *T-Rex* is #4 at \$37.9 million. Then the numbers drop to *Michael Jordan* in #5 at \$18.5 million. Only 14 films on the list are above \$10 million and only 24 films have grossed over 1 million. The films are generally made for less than \$5 million so they have to gross over \$10 or \$15 million to break even since the film's producers only get a small percentage of the gross income.

What this suggests is IMAX really needs Disney. IMAX stock, which once sold around \$50 a share, is presently selling around \$1.25 a share. (Disney stock was selling at \$21 after Thanksgiving). IMAX is of interest to Disney if rumors are correct that Disney has little interest in projects that gross under \$50 million.

An aside: *Cyberworld*, a compilation of computer generated films that had little in common (I disliked it), is #14 on the chart at \$10.3 million; *Siegfried & Roy* (a film I hated, but sat through to see Nina Paley's 70mm short) is #17 at \$5.2 million and *Haunted Castle*, a ride film I enjoyed, isn't on the chart. Information from www.the-numbers.com A list at TheMovieTimes.Com says *Haunted Castle* has grossed \$3.2 million.



T.R.A.N.S.I.T

SOCIETY FOR ANIMATION STUDIES (SAS) has updated their website with a list of papers presented at previous conferences. The 13th Annual SAS Conference was at Concordia College, Montreal, Canada

in October.. Marty McNamara presented a paper on "Reverse Chronology in Animation Narrative" (for example T.R.A.N.S.I.T. by Piet Kroon). www.awn.com/sas

CHUCK JONES EXHIBIT? This vague note came from ASIFA Hollywood. "Art Institute of Southern California hosts the Chuck Jones Foundation inaugural exhibition. Chuck Jones is the professor emeritus of the Feature Animation program. The Art Institute of Southern California, 2222 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach."

ANIMATION FANS ARE DISCOVERING CHUCK JONES' "TIMBER WOLF" ON THE INTERNET It is Jones' first original animated character created for Warner Bros. in more than 40 years. The Flash cartoon premiered on October 24, 2001 on warnerbros.com and over a million visitors will have seen part of the 13 week series by the time you read this. A new "websode" appears weekly.

The one I saw had little action. It was mainly talking heads and wasn't very funny. I tried to see a 2nd episode, but after waiting 8 to 10 minutes for it to load, I only saw a 15 second clip of the wolf talking and then a "play again" button appeared. I clicked on it, but only the same clip was shown.

ICEBOX.COM IS NOW A PAY-PER-VIEW SITE They charge 25 cents (regular price will be 40 cents) for each episode you watch. You can watch it as many times as you wish in a 24 hour period. Offerings include *Garbage Island*, *Hard Drinkin' Lincoln*, *Jesus and his Brothers*, *Hidden Celebrity Webcam*, and the racially offensive *Mr. Wong*.

RHINO HOME VIDEO TO RELEASE GUMBY ON TAPE The deal includes 214 episodes of *The Gumby Show* and *The All-New Gumby* (1956 - 1988). This is the first time the full Gumby library will be available for purchase. Rhino plans to release DVD boxed sets of the complete library and individual DVDs and VHS tapes. You can also expect to see new Gumby products in stores.

"THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE ACHMED" IS AVAILABLE FROM MILESTONE Lotte Reiniger's *Adventures of Prince Achmed*, 1926, 72 min. animated, drawn from *The Arabian Nights*. The *NY Times* reports, "remarkably, the film is done entirely in silhouette, which was Reiniger's medium. As she explained the process in a 1936 article, silhouette films were photographed movement by movement, as were cartoon drawings. But instead of drawings, minutely hinged marionettes made of black cardboard and thin lead were used. These were laid out on a glass table, lighted from underneath and photographed from above. A battle between witches who change from scorpions to serpents to vultures to lions to a half-dozen other creatures must have been a challenge." For info. (800) 603-1104

ASIFA-EAST HELD AN ANIMATION ART AUCTION AND BBQ (without serving any food!) in November. But they did serve up a mighty tasty selection of films for people to watch courtesy of the Cartoon Network. Art was donated by Nickelodeon, Blue Sky, Bill Plympton and other studios.

TOM SITO HAS RETIRED FROM BEING PRESIDENT OF HOLLYWOOD'S ANIMATION UNION On September 25. The Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists Local 839 of IATSE held an election. Kevin Koch ran without opposition for president. George Sukara ran for vice president. Jeff Massie ran for recording secretary and Jan Browning ran for sergeant-at-arms. All ran without opposition. Steve Hulett was reelected as the business agent. His job was challenged by Karan Storr. The new and returning officers were sworn in Nov. 6.

On Nov. 7 Sito presented a talk about his career to members of ASIFA-SF. He took us behind the scenes at Disney and other studios and mentioned studio politics, details about story development and directing and other fascinating things. He told wonderful stories about working with the great animators of the past in LA, NY and London, plus a few tales about some of the worst people in the industry. Sito is a charming as well as informative presenter and judging by the audience reaction, including a few calls and e-mails the next day, this was our most popular program of the year for many of the people in the audience.

Sito didn't say much about the union, but he left me some union literature explaining the benefits of joining. It listed some obvious benefits like protecting members from being fired with no warning (even for having health problems like AIDS) and their helping members being harassed or discriminated against. Among union benefits are an excellent health insurance plan (including benefits for same sex couples), a credit union, and a retirement plan (it is hard for some non-union animators to maintain health insurance if they switch jobs a lot). There is an employment board (e-mail notices are sent to people requesting them) and other benefits.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH (from ASIFA-Hollywood's latest newsletter - after reading it, read the news items that follow) "What a lot of artists don't understand is that film is an investment. Investors are staking a bunch of money on a project, and they want more money back. They don't give out money for the sake of art - this is not a donation industry. Artists have got to be better prepared for these dry spells in the industry. Even a 5 year contract ends eventually. A guaranteed job is a myth... Commercial artists are not fine artists. Commercial art is for one reason - money... This is a lesson that most animation artists have not yet learned - they still think they're fine artists. We have to start educating ourselves and stop being helpless." By James Parris, now a computer animator in LA and a former president of the animators' union local in Orlando, Florida when he worked for Disney.

Editor's note: ASIFA was organized to celebrate and honor animation and to get people to recognize it as a great art form. None-the-less it is also important to be aware of economic realities. Although several local companies are doing well, having worked on a number of projects that have been extremely successful, other segments of the industry have been "downsizing." With that in mind I printed the above quote and the following disturbing news items.

MTV LAYS OFF HUNDREDS OF EMPLOYEES AND CLOSES THEIR ANIMATION STUDIO IN NYC. MTV announced a worldwide restructuring plan that includes laying off 450 people (8% to 9% of their staff). Departments seriously affected include online divisions and ending their commercial production and animation units. Tom Freston, CEO of MTV Networks said in a company memo that MTV will now rely on outside/independent animation producers.

Back in the 1980's MTV relied on outside producers, including Colossal Pictures, for their animation. When they opened their MTV Animation Studio there were all kinds of claims about needing more control over productions, the need to cut costs, etc. to justify that move.

Abby Terkuhle is stepping down as president of MTV Animation. He may continue his relationship with the company as an outside producer.

Years ago Terkuhle developed a competition for MTV that prompted me to write a scathing article at that time about their exploiting animators. They got about 300 people to make completed 15 second MTV station ids for free (often at great expense)! The lucky winners (10 of them) were given cash prizes that were less than what MTV was paying Colossal for an id. The winners got shown at the Animation Celebration in LA and on MTV. Was this a colossal rip-off?

MTV's parent company, Viacom, had previously announced their revenues have dropped and costs have increased due to lower ad revenues since September 11. Also Blockbuster, owned by Viacom, is writing off about \$353 million worth of video tapes. They are "less productive" VHS tapes being dropped as they shift their inventory over to the growing DVD rental market.

ELECTRONIC ARTS TO LAY OFF 1/3RD OF ONLINE GAMING DIVISION They will cut about 250 jobs as the online division isn't meeting their projected growth expectations. The company has about 3600 employees worldwide. They have employed a lot of animators in the Bay Area, but recently there was a 10% cut-back and several animators were laid-off.

DISNEY'S SECRET LAB TO CLOSE Disney will close The Secret Lab, their visual effects department that provides images for Disney features and images for other studios. It was formed after Disney acquired Dream Quest Images in 1996. The division is working on CGI effects for *Reign of Fire*, scheduled to be released in June, 2002. The unit will be absorbed into Disney's animated features division. They will no longer seek contracts to do special effects work for other studios. (Earlier this year we reported that Disney was going to lay off about 350 of their 1700 employees in their animated features division.)

Disney watchers are concerned the studio lacks solid leadership in their feature animation division. TV animation seems to be doing well, turning out lots of shows and direct-to-video sequels. When Secret Lab opened and created the feature *Dinosaurs*, there was great optimism about the company's future as a producer of great cg features. For the moment the company's best products are produced by their partner Pixar.

Many people believe that if Disney doesn't produce a hit every time something is wrong. They are being unrealistic

about the film business. While Pixar has only produced hits, that is a rare phenomenon. Tom Sito told me that Warner Bros. expects 1 out of 8 features they produce to be a box office hit. KC

BLUE SKY LAYS OFF ABOUT 100 PEOPLE IN THEIR ANIMATION DEPARTMENT. Blue Sky Studios is nearing completion of *Ice Age*, a computer animated feature for Fox. It opens on March 15, 2002 and is being directed by Chris Wedge (Oscar for his short *Bunny*). The company's credits include effects animation for *Joe's Apartment*, *Fight Club* and for the TV series *The Sopranos*. The trades say they are already "in development" on their next feature.

CINAR, THE CANADIAN ANIMATION COMPANY HIT WITH A FINANCIAL SCANDAL, HAS REPAID A LOT OF THEIR DEBT AND MAY LIQUIDATE WHAT IS LEFT The Cinar Corporation has now repaid \$26 million in loans. Beginning in late 1999, they were in the news several times with numerous reports of financial problems and lawsuits regarding illegally obtained Canadian tax credits, dubious investments in offshore accounts and misappropriation of funds by senior executives. The firms founders were fired in August, 2000, and were subsequently sued by Cinar.

The company is searching for a buyer (they are represented by Merrill Lynch). They were once a major producer of TV animation for kids and they still own rights to several shows. They are still working on several series in connection with overseas production houses and foreign backers. They include *The Little Lulu Show* and *Mona the Vampire*. A recently developed line of toys and games based on their series *Caillou* is being sold in the US by FAO Schwartz.

NEWS FROM ASIFA ISRAEL by Tsvika Oren A light rain on Oct 15 supposedly marked the end of Summer in Israel. It was a very exciting summer as far as animation was concerned as three international film festivals presented excellent selections of animated films.

The Jerusalem Festival in July presented *Shrek* as their opening night feature. This was the first time in their 18 years of existence that they chose to celebrate their official opening program with an animated film. *Shrek* was received with wild enthusiasm.

Included in the festival's 150 programs was a "world's best" animation show compiled by festival programmer Avinoam Harpak. The program of 13 shorts included *The Boy Who Saw the Iceberg* by Paul Driessen, *Bully Dance* by Janet Perlman, *Village of Idiots* by Fedorenko/Newlove, Bill Plympton's *Eat* and Sapegin's *Snails*. All 3 screenings were sold out and a lot of people were disappointed about not being able to get tickets.

The 1st CoCarAn Festival in Tel Aviv in August combined COMics, CARicature and ANimation arts for the first time. The festival included 108 shorts in 15 animation programs. They were curated by Tsvika Oren. Also, the festival's sponsor, The Cartoon Network, presented selections of recent works and of classics from their vast library (Tex Avery, Chuck Jones, Bob Clampett, etc). The British Council presented a tribute to BAA (British Animation Awards) with Jayne Pilling in person, and to TVC London's TV specials with TVC's top exec. Norman D. Kauffman in person. Ms. Pilling

also conducted a stimulating meeting with ASIFA members and another with festival and film events directors. Another exciting meeting was with Pixar artist Alex Orrelle. There were also special programs paying homage to Astley-Baker films and to Bolex Brothers. Nearly 3000 people crowded the animation programs.

The 17th Haifa Festival in October included among its 130 programs a 'Kids festival' curated by Alit Karp. The animated films included *Petit Potam* by Deyries/Choquet, a 75 min. feature from Luxembourg and France, 2001. Jannik Hastrup 2nd feature *Mice and Romance*, 60 min., Denmark, 2000 and Richard Golezowski 29 min. *Hooves of Fire* for BBC Animation, 2000.

There was a "World's Best" selection for adults, curated by Tsvika Oren. It included the world premiere of *King Solomon and the Bee* from Pitchi-Poy Studio in Jaffa (an international production made for S4C/BBC/HBO, directed by Noam Meshulam), a selection of ads from Wild Brain Studio, SF, CA and Will Vinton's Studio, Portland, OR; Jose Miguel Ribeiro's suspenseful *The Suspect*, 1999, Portugal; Bruno Bozzetto's *Europe & Italy*, 1999, (our audience identified with the Italian sense of (dis)order and found this work to be hilarious) and *Premiers Jours* from the NFB of Canada, 1980, a wonderfully poetic 9 minute classic by the late Clorinda Warny.

ASIFA Israel holds at least one meeting-screening every month. This summer we showed new work by Avi Ofer, Gur Moshe's SIGGRAPH '99 Hon. Mention winner *Scoops* (on Maya); Yael Shahmon's *Tennis*, Hon. mention winner at Tricky Women Festival, Austria; Hanan Kaminski's Silver Pulcinella (Italy) winner *Pettson & Findus*; Alon Bentov 27 min. 3D-Studio-Max *Deathtiny*; Omer Makober's *Bees Song* and *Kats the Cat*, Flash films; Tal Schwartzman's *Lunch Time*; Roni Oren's Bezeq-Internet *Parrot* commercial; Sharon Gazit's Logi TV spots and several commercials and other commissioned works by the leading Tel Aviv studios: Broadcast Postproductions, Pil Animation, Pitchi-poy, Zeppelin, Disk-in and Multiview.

CREATING A DVD: A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR PRESENTING EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION

by Deanna Morse

The following are excerpts from a long article Morse wrote about creating a DVD of her work. The project took over 2 years to complete.

I am a film artist: an animator and experimental filmmaker. I have been making short films and videos regularly for the past thirty years or so. I was approached by Ed Anderson from Trillion Digital in Grand Rapids, Michigan www.trilliondigital.com, who offered to compile and publish a retrospective of my work on a DVD...



The first steps were compiling the retrospective. I found the best copies of my films and videos, and arranged for transfer to Beta SP. For two early films where I had used

copyright protected music, I replaced the tracks with cleared and legal music...

We ended up including 36 short films, organized into eight categories. The total video running time is over 2.5 hours. In addition, the disc includes over two hundred production stills with captions, five storyboard to film comparisons, and interactive and animated motion menus...

The DVD includes five films with "angles," a technical possibility unique to DVDs. In these five films, the viewer can press the angle button on their DVD remote controller to toggle between the original storyboard and the finished animation....

The basic steps of this DVD included:

- Generating the original video/film materials
- Technical fixes: cleaning up that material as needed
- Transferring to high quality video for encoding into the computer
- Organizing the material into sections: determining all elements of the final project
- Developing a 'bit budget' for the project (how much material, what size disc is required)
- Encoding the video from analog to digital (tape to computer)
- Scanning slides and graphics for the production stills
- Scanning storyboards for the 'angles'
- Laying storyboards to video, matching timing with finished production
- Designing the user interface
- Generating the visual elements of the interface: scanning and cleaning up those elements
- Production of the graphic interface (including layout, resizing, adding shadows)
- Grant writing to cover the cost of commercial replication
- Writing captions for the production stills
- Testing captions, and production stills
- Determining the 'active screen areas' for interactivity
- Programming the interactivity
- Programming other elements: such as angles, captions, chapter stops
- Testing the discs for bugs and errors
- Transferring all materials to DLT tape for replication
- Designing the label for the DVD disc
- Writing and designing the booklet for insert
- Writing and designing the cover of the disc package
- Planning for the Premiere Celebration Party

Deanna Morse is an artist/animator and a Professor in the School of Communications at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan. Her work has been selected for international festivals, and screened on commercial and public television. Her films are represented in permanent collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art. For more information: website: faculty.gvsu.edu/morsed or morsed@gvsu.edu

TO PURCHASE MORSE'S "MOVE.CLICK.MOVE" ON DVD send \$25 (make check payable to Grand Valley State University) to Professor Deanna Morse, School of Communication, 268 LHS, Grand Valley State University, Allendale, MI 49401

AN INTERVIEW WITH PETE DOCTER, DIRECTOR OF "MONSTERS, INC." by Karl Cohen

Monsters, Inc. from Pixar/Disney is the first feature directed by Pete Docter. When I was invited to interview him I thought he might talk about new technology and artistic advances in the film. When we spoke it became clear that the important story he wanted to share with us was how the studio shepherded him through the process of developing and directing his first animated feature. They brought together people with different talents who could work together as a team. The film was created through sharing and cooperation rather than by having a strong dictatorial director.

Although Docter is given credit for creating the original idea for *Monsters, Inc.*, one of the first things he said was, "It is misleading to say the film was my idea because there are so many other people involved. It was a group effort." At first he developed ideas with story artist Jeff Pidgeon and production designer Harley Jessup. Andrew Stanton (Oscar nomination for *Toy Story*) wrote the first script and he became the film's executive producer. As they developed their ideas they would take them to John Lasseter (director of *Toy Story*, 1995; *A Bug's Life*, 1998 and *Toy Story 2*, 1999) who would advise them on how to make the script stronger. Docter said, "John is so amazing, his input was invaluable throughout the whole process. He's already done 3 films and he has a great mind... he has a terrific grasp about how an audience views a film."

Co-director Lee Unkrich said "One of the great things about working at Pixar is that you can assemble a great talent pool and just be a bunch of guys hashing this stuff out. John (Lasseter) is as quick to get in the trenches with us as anybody. In the end everybody contributes and they don't keep tabs of what each person contributed as the end product is what counts. It is Pete's film and John was there to guide him as he hadn't directed a film before. Pete is an amazing animator, but since this was his first feature John was there to help."

As the script progressed more people became involved, but the story development process remained essentially the same for five years. Docter said, "We would take it to a point where we were comfortable with it and we would pitch it to those guys and they would punch holes in it in a friendly way. We'd make it stronger and then when we were all comfortable with it, we would take it down to Disney and present it to Tom Schumacher (president of Walt Disney Feature Animation) and Peter Schneider and they would knock holes in it. We would go back and fix it again and the whole process repeats and repeats for 5 years, and now we are done. You build up thick skin as you tend to take it fairly personally. Nobody means it personally as you're talking about the film, but you really invest a lot of yourself in the film. It's a tough process."

Lee Unkrich said that one of the great things about their relationship with Disney (Disney and Pixar have a 50% partnership) is Disney didn't work on the project on a daily basis so when they were consulted they offered fresh criticism. "We sometimes are too close to our material and we can't see some of the problems. Tom Schumacher is very good at stepping in and giving very good broad stroke notes about things that are and are not working. Another great thing about Disney is that they never tell us how to solve a problem.

They just point things out and have trusted us to come up with creative solutions."

The biggest challenge throughout the production was the story according to Docter. "I think that will always be the case. At Pixar we place a great deal of emphasis on story and the characters. You can have some really stunning imagery and technical innovation, but after about 5 minutes the audience is bored and they want something more interesting - story. You're asking people to commit an hour and a half of their life and it better be something worthwhile."

Docter oversaw every facet of the production. One area he found "rather exciting and somewhat nerve racking" was voice recording sessions. He had gone to a couple of recording sessions on *Toy Story*, to observe Lasseter working with actors. "What I learned is that my job is to set up as much of the situation as I can, give them all the information that they need and then stand back and watch them go."

There is a lot of improvisation on Pixar soundtracks. Also, a lot of script changes. One week Docter would tell John Goodman "so Sullivan is a janitor now" and the next month "now he's the best scarer on the floor." He said Goodman "was very patient with us. He rolls with the punches."

He was delighted to work with Bill Crystal whom he describes as "an amazing actor, very clever and really funny on and off screen. He is like having a team of writers along." He was glad Crystal was recorded in a soundproof studio as Docter would have ruined a lot of takes with his laughter had he not been in a control room. Crystal was the voice of Mike, Sulley's best friend. Mike is a little one-eyed round green monster.

It is common in the industry to make videotapes of the recording sessions so animators can study how voice actors move when they say their lines. Animators didn't use as much of this type of reference material on *Monsters, Inc.* as the film's characters are so unusual. The one person they did watch a lot was Marry Gibbs, the girl who did the voice of Boo, the little girl who enters the world of the monsters. She is the only human in the film. Boo was the character they were most concerned with as her success on the screen depended on how well they captured the movements of a real three-year old child.

Boo is not a photo realistic child. Docter says she is an abstracted human like Al in *Toy Story 2* or Geri in *Geri's Game* (1998 Oscar winner, by Jan Pinkava, Pixar). She was designed to fit into the world created for this film. Docter didn't want her to stand out from the other characters.

Docter is a fan of the strong modern looking 2D animation of the 1950's. He is glad that the title sequence and end credits are a nod to that look. It was designed by Geefwee Boedoe (his nickname as he couldn't pronounce his real name when he was very young) and it recalls the work of Saul Bass.

Work at Pixar often began about 8 in the morning for Docter and he usually went home around 8 or 9 at night. He usually had his weekends free as the producers at Pixar "are getting better and better about that so people don't kill themselves." He is looking forward to a vacation before going back to begin development of his ideas for future features.

As he looks back over his 5 years of work on the film he says, "I wouldn't say this film went very smoothly, but in the end I'm very pleased with what we have."

COMING NEXT ISSUE: MORE ON THE MAKING OF "MONSTERS, INC."

ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO, THE BAY AREA'S ANIMATION ASSOCIATION PRESENTS



Mindscape

ANIMATION AS A FINE ART

Rarely seen artistic triumphs that celebrate animation as a great art form. An international selection from Europe and North America.

For our December meeting Prescott Wright has selected about 90 minutes of exceptional works that explore a variety of styles, techniques and approaches to storytelling. Many were in past Tournee of Animation programs and most have won numerous awards. You will not find a program like this anywhere else in the world.

Our 16mm program (no video) includes:

Work from the studio of Richard Williams

Mindscape, a pinscreen film by Jacques Drouin, Canada (using a screen designed by Alexandre Alexieff)

Le Joie de Vivre (*The Joy of Living/Life*) by Hoppin and Gross, a celebration of life in modern France, 1934

Merry Manequins, Ub Iwerks' Art Deco masterpiece, 1937

Harpya by Raoul Servais, Belgium, 1978

It's Nice to Have a Wolf Around the House by Paul Fierlinger, 1977

On Land, At Sea and In the Air by Paul Driessen, Holland

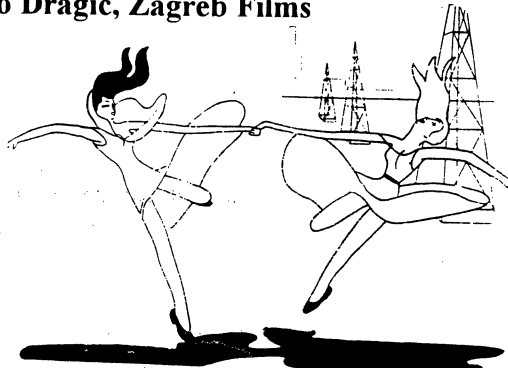
A by Jan Lenica (he died this year), Poland/France, 1964, based on a story by Inesco

The Family that Dwelt Apart by Yvon Mailletb, Canada, from a story by E.B. White

Ubu by Geoff Dunbar, England, 1978, story by Alfred Jarry

Way to Your Neighbor by Nedjeljko Dragic, Zagreb Films

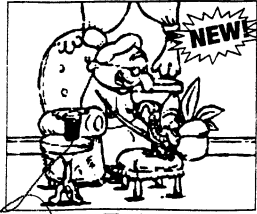
and more as time permits



Le Joie de Vivre

At the Exploratorium

Wednesday, December 19, 7:30 pm, free, public invited



Love That Pussy
Starring Nanna and Lil' Puss Puss
DNA Productions, Inc. (1:20)

TELL PEOPLE YOU RESPECT THAT THEY SHOULD PROBABLY AVOID THE NEW SICK AND TWISTED SHOW by Karl Cohen The program might be entertaining to someone who has never seen one of these shows, but quite frankly this is a really dull edition. The only great shorts in the program are Betty Boop in *Snow White*, 1933 (why was it

included?) and Bill Plympton's *Eat*, 2001. There isn't a film in it that is so bad, gross or disgusting that it becomes "good." The rest of the show is just mediocre stuff intended to amuse 12 year olds who are just discovering sex, dirty words, etc.

I listened to the audience response at the Castro and rarely was their much laughter. Six *No Neck Joe* shorts were added to the program, but only one or two got much laughter and two or three got none. The only solid applause was for *Eat* and *Snow White*. People also liked the two Don Hertzfeldt shorts that were added (I still dislike them). *Harry Pothead*, the token drug film, got one person applauding loudly, but nobody else joined in.

Animation is almost non-existent in several of the shorts. A paper jaw sliding up and down is about as good as it gets in two or three works. Poorly designed and executed artwork is the norm for this show.

I was disappointed that a new work by the Bolex Brothers wasn't shown, nor was *Thank You Mask Man*. I was also disappointed that the show opened with a stupid live action "comedy" starring Spike, the producer of the show. It was as close as the program got to being really awful.

FESTIVALS

ART IN MOTION, Jan. 15 deadline for works that can be exhibited on the Internet. Online exhibit and international tour. Cash grand prize. USC School of Fine Art, Wall Hall room 103, University Park, LA 90089-0292 www.usc/aim aim@usc.edu

ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO
PO Box 14516
San Francisco, CA 94114

BIG MUDDY, Jan. 14 deadline. Cash prizes, entry fee. For film and video. Dept. of Cinema, Mailcode 6610, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois 62901 www.bigmuddyfilm.com

HUMBOLDT deadline Jan. 31/Feb. 15. \$10-30 fee, cash and non-cash prizes, no video. www.humboldt.edu/~filmfest (707) 826-4113

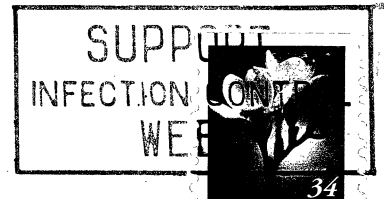
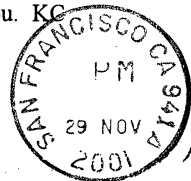
MEDIAWAVE IN HUNGARY, no entry fee, but \$55 to get submission sent back! (only send vhs 1/2" video) Jan. 20 deadline. Go to www.mediawave.com for details.

BAD FESTIVALS

HAS A FESTIVAL RIPPED YOU OFF? A member recently informed us a festival wanted to screen a work on short notice. She reluctantly agreed to sent them her only Beta SP copy, the format they screen. She e-mailed me, "I was given explicit understanding that it would be returned immediately after the screening. Two months have passed, and they still haven't returned it, in spite of my frequent calls and emails. Thanks to them, I have to make a new master. I regret ever having responded to her, and I have no idea why she is doing this."

The animator was about to make a new Beta SP master when I was told about the problem. I sent 2 or 3 e-mails to the festival letting them know I was going to write about the artists' problem. About 36 hours before the master was to be made the animator was contacted and told the missing tape was being returned. A messenger delivered it the next day.

If you had a rotten experience in the past or are messed with by dubious festivals in the future, let ASIFA-SF know. We can try to resolve the new situation. If they don't resolve the problem, we can at least warn others about them. We can also tell our members about those who have created problems in the past. Our newsletter is read by a lot of people and festivals can not afford bad press. ASIFA is here to help you. KC



650202 Local
John Peterson
12 Bishop Lane
Menlo Park, CA 94025

**SUZIE STARS
THE CHRISTMAS TREE**



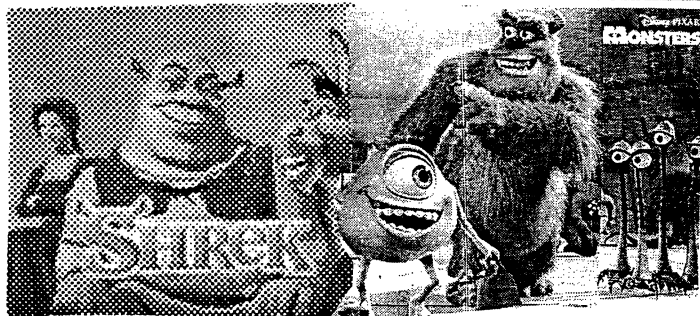
This issue was written by Karl Cohen, Tsvika Oren and Deanna Morse. Pete Davis proofread and Laura Tulloss assisted with the production. Mailing crew included Shirley Smith, Tara Packard, Nancy Phelps and Ron Seawright.

Membership in our chapter is \$22 a year or \$44 for joint local and international membership.

June - too soon yet

Bill Plympton

JANUARY, 2002



WHAT ANIMATED FEATURE WILL WIN THE OSCAR? I suspect this will be a popular discussion among film fans until the winner is announced. While there are 12 or 13 films trying to get nominations, which is an honor worth going for, I expect the likely winner to be either *Shrek* or *Monsters, Inc.*

The first person whose opinions I saw in print was Ed "Acting for Animators" Hooks who writes a monthly newsletter on the Internet. He says, "I'm predicting a win for *Shrek*, not because the movie is more technically excellent than *Monsters, Inc.* It isn't. But because it contains more in-jokes, and Academy Awards are voted on by Hollywood insiders. All that back-stabbing anti-Disney humor in *Shrek* is going to resonate with the voters. I suspect."

"Probably, it doesn't matter which movie wins. We're fortunate to have two such brilliant films emerge within the same year. Between them, they set a new high standard for animation technical excellence, and the acting is getting better all the time. For my money, neither *Shrek* nor *Monsters, Inc.* is as emotionally satisfying as was *The Iron Giant* but then maybe I expect too much by holding that film as gauge. Perfection is after all perfection." For a free subscription to Ed Hooks informative newsletter send your e-mail address to edhooks@best.com

awn.com suggests an Oscar nomination may go to *Waking Life*. It has a lot of critical acclaim. It is aimed at intelligent adults, not kids. It has grossed \$2.35 million.

"SHREK" WINS MORE AWARDS The National Board of Review and the Los Angeles Film Critics presented it their best animated feature awards for 2001. The British Academy Film & Television Awards (BAFTA) gave *Shrek* the award for best children's feature. *Shrek* has been nominated by the AFI for their new best picture award. It was also on the cover of *Hollywood Reporter* in December reminding people to consider it for Oscar nominations in the "Best Picture and All Other Categories." At that time voting members of the Academy were attending special screenings held by studios to push their products with hopes that they will get nominations.

Shrek remains the top grossing film in the US for 2001 with a domestic gross over \$267 million (on 12/10). Its international box office was \$167.1 million on 12/10, giving it a worldwide gross of \$434.1 million. *Harry Potter* had grossed \$253.2 million as of 12/17 and it may pass *Shrek's* domestic gross by the end of the year.

PIXAR'S "MONSTERS, INC." IS SLOWLY HEADED TOWARDS GROSSING ALMOST AS MUCH AS "SHREK" After being the top box office champ for 2 weeks *Monsters, Inc.* dropped to 4th place. It had grossed \$204 million by Mon. 12/10 and was up to \$218.9 on 12/17. Will it eventually out gross *Shrek*?

JOHN LASSETER'S NEXT FEATURE PROJECT IS ABOUT CARS ON ROUTE 66 When I interviewed Pixar staff members about the making of *Monsters, Inc.*, none would comment on what Lasseter was working on. Their lips were sealed. It was "top secret." *Animation Blast* found out about the project in November by reading *USA Today*. KC

"SHREK" IS THE BEST SELLING DVD OF ALL TIME, BUT "PEARL HARBOR" HAS SET A NEW OPENING WEEK RECORD When *Shrek* was released on DVD November 2, it set a record for the opening week sales. It has now sold more than 5.5 million DVDs. It has passed the sales record of *Gladiator* to become the all time DVD sales champ. Now Disney's *Pearl Harbor* is the first week champ with 3.7 million sold.

"MONSTERS, INC." ADDED "OUTTAKES" TO THEATRICAL PRINTS in December. This is an interesting ploy to try to get people to see the film again by giving them something extra. I suspect it works. Once again the "outtakes" were added to the end credits of the film. You can see examples of them at monstersinc.com and apple.com/trailers.

DISNEY/PIXAR ON SEX AND LUST by Karl Cohen In recent e-mails with Ed Hooks we discussed lust in animation, a forbidden topic when it comes to Disney films. Ed wrote me, "I was bothered by the asexual manner of the character (Sully in *Monsters, Inc.*). It would have been stronger if they had borrowed some of Goodman's frat-house kind of sexuality, I suspect." I replied, "...Don't think Disney characters know what real lust is, or are allowed to express it unless they are evil, and you know what happens to those guys. I've never thought about it, but there might be a 'lust does not pay rule' in the fine moral world of Disney films."

Ed replied, "I'm not suggesting that the characters have to behave in a horny way or do anything untoward. All I'm saying is that, as an identifiable characteristic, human sexuality is palpable. We all exude it to one degree or another, and I believe that kids are suspicious when they do NOT see it. It falls under the 'there's something wrong with this picture' category after you pass the seven or eight year old stage."

While several Disney films have true romance themes (they generally end with the suggestion that a wedding will be held soon - *Snow White*, *Alladin*, *Beauty and the Beast*, etc.), it is hard to find examples of lust. In Mickey's *Plane Crazy*, 1928, Mickey forces himself on Minnie. After Mickey makes her kiss him she jumps out of the plane. Then the plane crashes. In *The Three Caballeros*, 1945, Donald spies a sexy

female on the beach. The telescope gets longer and straighter, somewhat like an erection. In the "Pecos Bill" segment of *Melody Time*, 1948, there is a pair of guns flying around and going off when Pecos Bill kisses Blue Foot Sue for the first time. It is wild lust and it ends unhappily just as other attempts at less than perfect romance do (*Pocahontas*, etc.).

I asked a Disney artist about my study and he replied, "The Disney lust thing is interesting. I always maintain that Disney has that straitjacket of the name-reputation when talking about sex. You could add *Hunchback of Notre Dame* when Esmerelda was so obviously over-sexed and Claude Frollo horny for her that not only did audiences stay away but parents groups actually got mad at Disney for allowing such a story. There was a backlash in public opinion. No Southern Baptist Group gets mad when Warner Bros., Dreamworks or Fox is irreverent, but Disney is in that special niche of the American psyche between Johnny Appleseed and the Easter Bunny."

An aside: Gay characters, which often added humorous moments to cartoons from other studios in the past, are also quite rare in Disney products. There is a wonderful, obviously gay dragon in *The Reluctant Dragon* and suggestions of a gay pair in *The Lion King*.

When I told a scholar what I was thinking about he said, "Disney films are primarily aimed at prepubescent kids and grandma/grandpa - the two segments of the audience not preoccupied with 'love, sex and lust.'"



WILD BRAIN CREATED 3 OUTSTANDING 'FOCUS ON ANIMATION' ADS FOR FORD The 15 second Ford Focus ads are fast-paced spots combining 3D CG animation and 2D traditional cel animation. The ad "Speedball" stars the famous "Smiley Face" as the car's driver. Mike Smith was creative director and Nicholas Weigel was the director. "Dolls" featuring 5 colorful Japanese nesting dolls was directed by Denis Morella. "Hula," with a sexy woman playing with a Hula-Hoop was directed by Gordon Clarke.

Other credits include Saira Mathew and Ben Fischler, lead technical directors; Sam Hood, character designer; David Brandt and Seryong Kim, character modelers; Seryong Kim, car modeler; Lee Greenwood, character animator; Raquel Coelho, CG animator; Nathan Stephens and Kevin Bell, Mac artists; John Korellis, Aaron Sorenson, and Brad Rau, 2D animators, and Robert Valley, concept boards. Brian Fee, Amber MacLean, Sam Hood, Dick Hill, and Billy Burger were assistant animators and Osamu Tsuruyama did layouts. Liz Gazzano and Amy Capen were producers of the series and Jeff Fino was executive producer.

"JURASSIC PARK III," FEATURING MONSTERS BY ILM, IS BEING SOLD ON DVD AND TAPE WITH A DISPOSABLE CELL PHONE The "Jurassic Park Survival Cell Phones" will offer 60 minutes of prepaid calling time without the requirement of a cellular service contract or monthly fees. It is available in special DVD and video packages with the feature. The phone has 2 buttons on it, "call" and "end." Computer voice-recognition will connect your call for you. The packaged offer retails for \$30

WILD BRAIN UK DOES THEIR FIRST ADS, "BODY FANTASIES" FOR PARFUMS DU COEUR The ad produced in London for Parfum du Coeur promotes their newest fragrance line. The :15 and :30 second ads were directed by multiple Clio Award winner Mike Smith and produced by Nikki Kefford. They are animated using traditional 2D techniques including hand inking and painting. Digital effects were added to create a magical fairy-like feel.

WORK BY BAY AREA ANIMATION AND EFFECTS COMPANIES MAKE MILLIONS The top grossing film at the US box office this year is *Shrek* and November, 2001 was the biggest month ever for US theaters (says *The Hollywood Reporter*). The industry took in \$799.7 million in November and over half of that income came from Pixar's *Monsters* and *Harry Potter* with effects by ILM. (This was the second time the \$700 million mark was broken - the first time was a \$737.2 million month in 2000.) Three other features with effects work from ILM are on the year's box office top 10 list, *The Mummy Returns* (\$202 million), *Pearl Harbor* (\$198.5 million) and *Jurassic Park III* (\$181.1 million).

Electronic gaming is rarely mentioned in our newsletter, but it is a highly profitable multibillion dollar business that consumes a lot of animation. Among the large game companies in the Bay Area are Electronic Arts, Lucas Arts, 3DO and Midway (formerly Atari). A recent *Hollywood Reporter* article listed the 3 major sectors of the consumer entertainment industry today as music, movies and electronic gaming. The Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA) reported that in 2000 there were 220,000 jobs in the industry. They generated \$9 billion in wages. Sales of software and related hardware were \$10.5 billion in 2000, up 14.9% from 1999. On-line trade publications say that sales are up in 2001.

While the gross incomes of these industries sound impressive, that does not necessarily translate as profitable. We know Pixar is doing OK as they are a publicly held company and report their profits and losses quarterly. Several of the companies mentioned are privately held and do not disclose such information. 3DO has had three separate layoff events this year amounting to a reduction of over 25% of their staff. Their Redwood City office still employs over a 100 people (probably). A former employee says, "It would be incorrect to call them profitable. They haven't posted a profitable quarter since '97. Some local businesses owned by Japanese companies may be posting profits, namely Konami, Capcom and maybe Namco. That's not counting LucasArts, which is in a league of it's own."

Electronic Arts has announced signing a publishing deal with Lego to create over 30 software titles in the next three years. *Mindscapes' Lego Island* was a best seller in the past, but more recent Lego games didn't do as well. So now Lego hopes a new publisher will bring them another hit.

MAKE BETTER GAMES is part of the Games Developers Conference and Expo coming to San Jose March 21-23. gdconf.com run by CMP Media 600 Harrison St. SF 94107

CARTOON ART MUSEUM HAS REOPENED IN A GREAT NEW LOCATION They are now in a storefront space at 655 Mission, around the corner from the SF Museum of Modern Art. cartoonart.org 415/car-toon

KIM TEMPEST AND BOB INGOLD ARE OFF TO VEGAS TO ANIMATE COMPUTER GAMBLING MACHINES Ingold got involved with electronic gambling machines about 5 years ago when he was laid off from Atari. Kim Tempest, who is well known from her years as an animation teacher at De Anza College, had tried to hire Ingold away from Atari before. Now she was able to get him a job with her new employer, Prolific Publishing (a LA company opening an office in the Bay Area). Ingold says, "It wasn't till after I was hired they revealed a contract with Casino Data Systems to develop video slot machines for the gambling industry." About 18 months into development, Prolific ran short of money. They tried to borrow some from Casino, but were instead purchased by them.

"We became employees of CDS. Our best project was 'Monkey Business' including a DVD movie project to advertise the game. We showed some of it at an open screening a couple years ago. This year Aristocrat Technologies from Australia bought the company." Aristocrat closed the local office and moved the operation to Vegas. Ingold decided to accept their offer to move to Vegas as art lead. Tempest recently moved there and was promoted to management. Ten former CDS animators decided not to accept offers of employment with Aristocrat in Vegas.

Designing animation for these machines is a challenge as they have to keep it simple enough so it will not distract from the machine's purpose, but it has to have enough appeal to make people want to try it. I was once told that the animators sometimes joke that the litmus test of their work is "can a bleary eyed drunk at 3 in the morning figure out how to play the machine."

NINA PALEY AND BILLY GREENE WIN AWARDS AT THE DIRECT TV - LEVEL13.NET ONLINE ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL Best-in-show went to *Pasta for War* by Zach Schlappi. The 2D Animation winners were: 1st Place, *Drunky* by Aaron Augenblick, 2nd Place: *Fetch* by Nina Paley, 3rd Place: *Duncan* by Holly Klein. 3D Animation winners were: 1st Place, *It's Alive* by Terry Ziegelman and Paul George; 2nd Place: *Horses on Mars* by Eric Anderson; 3rd Place: *Thought Bubble* by Billy Greene. The Experimental winners were: 1st Place, *Walk* by Jeff Drew; 2nd Place, *Hara Mamba Ru* by Slava Ushakov and 3rd Place, *Bee Movie* by Gil Kenan

NINA PALEY AND SHIRLEY SMITH PREVIEWED WORK-IN-PROGRESS AT SPROCKET'S DECEMBER SHOW Paley showed *Lexi*, an experimental project made with Studio Artist by Synthetik Software. She created cats with painterly and abstract features, but their eyes were often realistic. Smith's *The Lost Sock* is her first work to use cel animation. It is a delightful offbeat humorous work.

NIK AND NANCY OF SPROCKET ARE GOING TO SUNDANCE Two films with music by Nik Phelps and the Sprocket Ensemble will be shown. They are *Booby Girl* by Brooke Keesling (Student Academy Award winner) and *The Cockettes*, a documentary directed by David Weissman.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION AND SEVERAL OTHER MEDIA GROUPS ARE PURCHASING A BUILDING It is at 145 Ninth Street (between Howard and Mission) They will move in soon. Meanwhile their offices/workspaces, etc. will remain at 346 9th Street, SF. **CONGRATULATIONS!**

ASIFA NEEDS A VOLUNTEER WHO CAN BACK-UP PHILIP MALKIN WHO PRINTS OUR MAILING LABELS Nobody called to volunteer in December. Malkin is back from 6 weeks in Europe. His future travel plans are not set so ASIFA-SF will need somebody to help out if he continues his travels. To ensure there is no interruption in the delivery of newsletters, ASIFA-SF needs to plan ahead "just in case."

At present our database is kept in File Maker Pro, but Malkin can export our database to another program. The mailing list/label tasks do not require a lot of time each month (mainly adding new members, changes of address and printing out labels) but they do require accuracy and being able to get the labels (ASIFA will pay for your supplies) to us in time for our mailing crew to do their job. If you can be of help, please contact Karl Cohen (415) 386-1004 karlcohen@earthlink.net **Please contact us right away.**

SCREENINGS

Tuesday, Jan. 8, **FAITH HUBLEY TRIBUTE**, including the local premiere of her last work *Northern Ice*, *Golden Sun* and other works. At the SF Museum of Modern Art



Thursday, January 10, 7 pm, "The Seventh Art: New Dimensions in Cinema" series begins with **Director Steve Lisberger in-person screening and discussing TRON, 1982**, his landmark fusion of cinema and computer culture.

The series will continue on the second Thursday of every month in SFMOMA's Wattis Theater. Tickets for each film are \$12 for SFMOMA and SFFS members, students with current ID and seniors, \$15 general admission. Advance tickets may be purchased at the SFMOMA admissions desk.

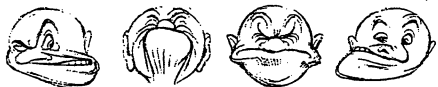
January 11 - 24. **JAN SVANKMAJER'S "LITTLE OTIK"** is a surreal live action nightmare that stars a really strange "baby" (stop-motion) that devours its world. Svankmajer's twisted horror film includes a dash of his equally strange Czech humor. Red Vic, 1717 Haight, 7 & 9:35 nightly + 2 & 4:30 Sat., Sun.

Wednesday, January 16, 7:30 pm **ASIFA-SF'S ANNUAL OPEN SCREENING FOR SHORTS BY INDEPENDENT AND STUDENT ANIMATORS** plus an excerpt of a documentary on the late **Faith Hubley**. New works and works-in-progress by Geoffrey Clark, Shirley Smith, Nina Paley, Jerold Howard, Stefan Gronsky, John Atkinson and others will be shown. **Anyone with a work on 16mm or 1/2" VHS or 3/4" tape is welcome to bring it unannounced the night of the show and we will show it.**



NATIONAL NEWS

ALEXANDER PETROV ANIMATED SANTA FOR COCA-COLA. Oscar winning director Alexander Petrov and Pascal Blais Productions in Canada have brought the Coca-Cola Santa Claus character to life in a 30-second spot titled "Classic-Sundblom." The well-known Haddon Sundblom illustration of Santa has been an icon of the Coca-Cola company for 70 years, but this is the first time it has been animated. Petrov used his legendary oil-painting-on-glass animation technique, the same technique used in his Oscar-winning film *The Old Man And The Sea*, *The Mermaid* and *The Cow*. Petrov painted over 700 images for the spot.



RICHARD WILLIAM'S 'THE ANIMATOR'S SURVIVAL KIT' SHOULD BE OUT BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS His publisher's press agent writes, "the books will be available for purchase as of late December, in case people in your organization are very eager to get copies prior to his visit." His talk/book signing for ASIFA will be at the Exploratorium, on Good Friday, March 29.

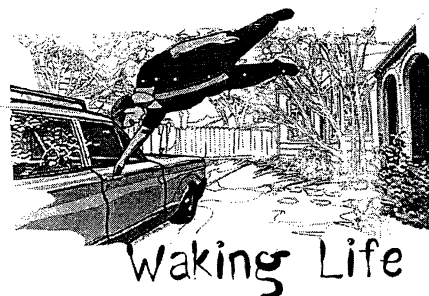
UCLA WILL PRESENT A TRIBUTE TO WALTER LANTZ FEBRUARY 5, in appreciation of a gift from The Walter Lantz Foundation that established the Walter Lantz Digital Animation Studio with the hope it will help talented new generations of animators achieve their promise as artists. The Walter Lantz Digital Animation Studio in Melnitz Hall is dedicated as a fitting tribute to Walter Lantz's extraordinary legacy. There will be a reception and open house at 6:30 followed by a tribute and screening of Lantz animated shorts. Hosted by Dean Robert Rosen and Animation Professor Dan McLaughlin. Free.

ERIC LEIGHTON MAY DIRECT "ASTRO-BOY" FOR SONY The cg feature will be based on a comic strip by Osamu Tezuka. (The TV show was also by Dr. Tezuka. He gave up medicine after WWII and went into comics!) Leighton was a stop-motion animator who lived and worked in San Francisco for many years. He left to co-direct *Dinosaurs* for Disney. Todd Alcott, who had worked on *Antz*, is writing the script.

SHOWTIME TO AIR "QUEER DUCK" They obtained the rights to the 5 shows that aired last year on Icebox.com and have ordered 15 more episodes. Mishmash Media produces the shows with writer Mike Reiss, who has won 3 Emmy awards for scripts for *The Simpsons* and *The Critic*. Xeth Feinberg, the director, designer and head animator of the shows, sent us a note that said, "who woulda predicted something from the Internet would come back to life."

INTERNATIONAL ASIFA MEMBERS The Fall issue our magazine was mailed to you from Canada in December (2nd issue for 2001). The editor apologizes for the delay.

**VISIT THE INTERNATIONAL WEB SITE ASIFA.NET
& VISIT US AT ASIFA-SF.ORG**



A Review by Lee Marrs

I was fascinated, delighted and bored by *Waking Life* depending on which segment I was watching. I enjoy and indulge in occasional philosophical discourse myself, so the movie's lack of explosions or pratfalls didn't bother me. However, as a fan of intriguing narrative, the unemphatic sameness of the episodes did begin to activate my own stream of consciousness: has my left sock heel slipped down into my shoe, or am I just feeling a wrinkle? I began to yearn for the few moments when the movie's artistic layers slipped into any whimsy at all: the small cosmic figures that frolicked around an academic noggin, or the monkey professor.

It's graphics, so your question was... I was puzzled at the scarcity of animated liveliness - why weren't there more moments like the two guys turning into cosmic clouds? The content of the dialogue often seemed perfect for flights of pictorial virtuosity. After all, visual flexibility is one of the major pleasures of animation, both for the viewers and the creators.

Why were the images so... straight? From a review I read later in *Animation Magazine* I learned that most of the visual work was done by artists rather than animators. And the review stated that the director had just "let them alone" to do their own thing. This certainly explained much: if there was no over reaching direction given to the different episodes, then creating the visual alterations in pacing and emphasis that give drama to a longer work are not possible, even with creative editing. Artists come from a related, but not identical, set of sensibilities than animators. So, animated action wouldn't be their interest or expertise. Too bad.

Beyond style is content. Actually, the pacing within the segments evokes another conclusion: I think a much more effective format would have been to serve these segments up as separate episodes - not as a movie at all. Looking to the content rather than the style of the movie, there is the missed opportunity to effectively stimulate the viewers' thinking on the nature of existence. These philosophical considerations would seem to be the point of *Waking Life*. As it is, the linking of disparate views in the various "interviews" pile up in such a way as to not give the viewer a chance to digest or ponder the valuable ideas expressed. Bingo! We're onto an entirely other construct from someone else. Too bad.

This is animation. The heated discussions I have run across about whether the movie is "really" animation or not strike an old chord within me. As one of the first wave of traditional animators to embrace computer work in the late 1970s, I faced a similar denunciation from colleagues - and deserting clients. But, I believed that these clunky mechanisms would get better and maybe even turn the animation field around - my one brilliant career move.

Y'all remember all the snotty put-downs? First of all, real animation was on film, not video. Real animation was inked by hand, not Xeroxed. It all translated into "ALL NEW

SHORTCUTS ARE BAD". Frankly, most new techniques are crude until imagination, experience and refinement of technology improve the result. Now I don't feel that the rotoscope technique will necessarily be the wave of the future in the way that computer graphics animation has revolutionized the present. But this technique widens graphic possibilities, and how can that hurt? Of course, I'd prefer a livelier use of the visuals than in *Waking Life*. That's personal taste. **What the animation field needs is the broadest possible range of tools to make our pie bigger... and bigger... and...**

Lee Marrs teaches courses in digital storytelling, animation, scriptwriting, and interactive design at SFSU's Oakland Multimedia Center, UC Berkeley Extension, Vista College, and the Center for Electronic Art. Lee Marrs Artwork celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2002. Email = lee@leemarrs.com

"WALKING LIFE" WINS THE NY FILM CRITICS BEST ANIMATED FILM AWARD The *Hollywood Reporter* called it "the most-surprising indie-studio upset." It beat out *Shrek* by only two votes.

PART 2, "MONSTERS, INC."

by Karl Cohen

PIXAR'S USE OF CO-DIRECTORS

Since live action features normally have one director, people are surprised that Pixar had three on *Monsters, Inc.* Lee Unkrich, a co-director on the film, explained that the company adopted that system after John Lasseter directed the first *Toy Story*. He says Lasseter found out the hard way that directing a computer generated feature is too much work for one person. At Pixar they now chose co-directors who can bring different strengths to each film.

Lee Unkrich came to Pixar with a background in live action editing and cinematography. He had directed a graduate student film at USC and then worked in the film and television industry as an editor. His skill as a non-linear Avid editor was part of the reason Pixar asked him to join their staff. He oversaw the editing, staging and cinematography of the new film, the same role he had on *Toy Story 2* (1999). He said, "In designing the cinematography of this film, I held true to the philosophy that I've used on all of the other Pixar films. Even though we are doing animation I only do things with the camera that you can do in a live action film. Although we have the liberty to do anything we want with our camera, it is better to keep everything more restrained. People are comfortable seeing a world that they are used to seeing when they go out to see a movie." He avoids tricky shots, rapid fire editing and other things that might be appropriate to rock videos.

Unkrich explained that because the film is about monsters it starts out dark and creepy. That is what most people will expect. Then the mood changes and people will discover it is a raucous comedy. There are scary parts "as most people enjoy being a little scared, but this is a family film and we don't want to turn anybody off with it." All Pixar films have dark moments and this film follows in that tradition.

"Much of my time was spent in the editing room with Jim Stewart and the other editors," says Unkrich. "We spent a lot of time hashing things out and restructuring the movie to get the rhythm of performances working nicely." He spent time working with layout supervisor Ewan Johnson and his team designing the shots of the film. Also, "as story problems would come I'd jump in to help."

The other co-director was David Silverman, one of the original directors of *The Simpsons*. Silverman worked on the story and wrote a lot of gags. He helped develop the personalities of the characters and added a great deal to the film's humor. He helped make the characters entertaining and believable and added a delightful sense of irreverence to the script. Unkrich said that Silverman is a really funny person and he helped make *Monsters,*

Inc. a very funny film. Silverman has moved back to Los Angeles to direct a *Simpsons* TV special and hopefully their first feature..

Silverman will be missed for many reasons including his musical abilities. He was in the company Dixieland band. Other regulars were senior animator Bud Luckey, Pete Docter and the lead character designer Ricky Nierva. Animation studios having Dixieland bands seems to be an obscure tradition that dates at least as far back as the 1940's when The Firehouse 5 plus 2 were regulars at Disney. Ward Kimball was a member of that group. In the 1970's Imagination Inc. in San Francisco rocked after hours with Bud Luckey on banjo and occasionally members of Turk Murphy's band sitting in.

WHAT'S NEW IN CG ANIMATION AT PIXAR?

Since *Toy Story* was completed there has been a trend toward greater visual complexity in each of their films. Tom Porter, supervising technical director on *Monsters, Inc.* (and winner of 2 Oscars) says *Toy Story* was made with 1/50th the computing power available today.

When Porter joined the *Monsters, Inc.* team he began by making a list of the technology they had to develop to get the film completed. One of the big problems was making hair move realistically. Sulley, a star of the film, is an 8 foot tall horned monster with a 700 pound body covered in blue-green hair. Having animators animate his hair by hand would have been an impossible task. Developing hair simulation software that can control hair movement was the answer.

They also developed simulation technology to move clothing independently of body motion. The big problem for Porter's staff the first year of preproduction was to develop these programs. "We spent a lot of time up front making sure we could get the simulation working. In the end it worked fine."

Another problem was creating the visual feel of atmosphere in large spaces. *Monsters, Inc.* was going to take place in an enormous factory and in vast outdoor spaces. They knew they had to suggest wind blowing, smoke, snow and other atmospheric effects. Porter said that historically computer graphics has presented a clean, crystal clear view of the world.

If you saw the ads for the film on TV you may have noticed a line of monsters marching towards the camera. In that factory sequence they become easier to see and their colors become richer and brighter as they move towards the camera. This naturalistic effect suggests some of the subtle attention to detail Pixar achieved.

Lighting on this film was a lot more sophisticated than it was in *Toy Story*. Lighting a hard plastic surface is a lot simpler than lighting fur and clothing. They got involved with the principles of back lighting, rim lighting, and other problems that they hadn't experienced in their previous films.

A typical day for Porter found him going over shader reviews, lighting reviews, keeping track of the big issues and running render checks to examine individual frames for problems that can develop. He oversaw approximately 100 people in the departments of lighting, shading, modeling, and shots. The shots department was established for this project to implement the hair and clothing simulation.

Pixar also has a new laser recording system that was used to transfer digital images to 35mm film. It offers a wider range of colors. Despite the use of this state of the art system to create the finest 35mm prints possible, Porter prefers seeing the film digitally. It is being shown that way in some Bay Area theaters. He says, "Digital projection looks terrific! It's rock solid. It's so much better than watching film going through a projector. Film has a slight jumpiness to it and grain. Digital looks exactly as it does on the monitors here when we are doing the lighting reviews, the effects reviews and everything else. That is what the director wants to see. It looks a little different on film."

NEXT MONTH: PART 3, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF NEW TECHNICAL INNOVATIONS - INTERVIEW with GLENN McQUEEN, SUPERVISING ANIMATOR

ANIMATOR FAITH HUBLEY DIED

DECEMBER 7 AT AGE 77 She was a remarkable spirit who inspired many of us. Her personal work has been seen throughout the world countless times, probably more often than any other independent female animator. When John died suddenly in the 1970's it was Faith who was expected to leave us as she had a "terminal" cancer at the time. She survived and kept her vow to make a personal film each year for the rest of her life. Her final film premiered in December at UCLA, a few days after she died.

It was a real pleasure knowing her as she always had a sincere positive attitude. She was willing to talk at great lengths when I was doing research that concerned her past. After being with her or talking with her on the phone I always felt she was very sharing and honest. She was a wonderful person and I felt great after being in her presence. She was so full of energy and life that it is hard to imagine I will not see her again.

Faith was the subject of at least two documentaries. A feature length film was recently completed and I assume it will be on PBS this year. As a memorial to Faith I plan to show part of a 25 minute documentary about her made in the 1990's for ITVS (and PBS) at our January meeting. K.C.

The following are comments by others who knew her.

Jerry Beck, Los Angeles, "Faith was a unique artist who turned animated cartoons into her art. Her strong personal point of view is evident in every frame of every one of her films. She was a mentor to many young animators and a delightful woman."

Beck ran the following on his web site **cartoon research.com** based on a notice by Bill Tessier. "Faith Hubley passed away in New Haven, CT this morning, Dec. 7th, from cancer. She taught a storyboarding class at both NYU Film School and Yale University. Her class opened the eyes and minds of her students to the limitless possibilities of animation. Her collaborations with her husband who passed away in the 70's resulted in numerous animated shorts, several of which won the Academy Award for best animated short, including *Moonbird* and *The Hole*."

"Since her husband's death she has maintained the production of one independent animated film per year - many of which deal with mythological or historical stories from cultures around the globe. Her work has been exhibited at the New York Museum of Modern Art and in numerous international festivals. Her personal work and the influence she bestowed upon her students mark her as an animator of the highest caliber. She will be missed."

Tsvika Oren, Tel Aviv, "I was a veteran Hubleys admirer and I was her guest many years ago. I guess I will always be indebted to Faith and John for enriching me and for having such a blessed influence on my 'animation thinking' which I hope I managed to pass on to many students and readers."

Tom Sito, Los Angeles, first met Faith around the time of John Hubley's death in 1977. He writes, "The last time I talked to Faith Hubley was at a tribute to Dan McLaughlin at UCLA. She had been having funding problems with her latest film. At one point she said 'If things don't get better I'm going to Bartender School and become a Bartender!' Faith never lost heart, never stopped making films of both a personal and progressive nature. She was a shining beacon and inspiration to many and especially women to take up animated filmmaking. She will be missed but her films will live on. When I pass into the next life I hope Faith is there to great me, and Faith, I want a Stoli-Martini straight up with olive!"

Adrienne Crew, S.F., "She was my teacher at Yale. She taught a storyboarding and design class in the art school which I took in my senior year. The most enjoyable way that I ever earned an "A." Faith's class was fun because all we did was watch movies, draw and critique storyboards. When we finished, Faith had us organize an opening reception with beverages and snacks. Someone even brought in edible centerpieces from the dining hall."



I'll always remember her wild white hair, blazing bright eyes and red, red lipstick. She was working on *Cosmic Eye* and let us see her storyboards. Influenced by her previous movie, *Sky Dance*, we made storyboards of films depicting stories from Mayan mythology. I miss her already..."

Karen Jacobs, Berkeley, "Faith was a mentor, friend and inspiration. A beautiful person, she lived fully every day, Faith gave me, literally, faith in the creative process and the need to love well. This makes me feel fortunate to have known her and to have spent time sharing with her - about our breast cancer and about other important things in our lives."

Chris Robinson organizes animation festivals in Ottawa, "I didn't really know Faith (we met once in Ottawa and spoke on the phone a couple of times), but I must say I was always excited to talk to her. I found her fiery and blunt. No bullshit. Just Faith."

Bill Plympton, NYC, "Faith was a wonderfully dedicated, creative artist who, with her husband John, changed the face of independent animation."

Chris Lanier, SF, "I'm glad I got to meet her at that ASIFA screening about a year ago. She seemed like such a warm person and her autobiographical film *My Universe Inside Out* was a real gem."

John Canemaker, NYC, "Faith and I were close friends for several years. We traveled together to Bratislava and enjoyed many dinners/parties in NY and at my place on Long Island. She had wit, style and great taste in everything she did. Her intense work ethic and beautiful films inspire me. She was always encouraging to all independent filmmakers. She lived a full life of joy and creativity. I miss her and am deeply saddened."

David Ehrlich, Randolph, Vermont, "Faith was a lovely woman, warm, loving, forgiving and dedicated to humanity and expression of the best of it in her art. She once told me that creating one film every year was strengthening her and earning her continued victory over the illness that had threatened her life. Finally, after so many years of films in celebration of life, Faith's body has given out. What is left to us is the memory of that big embracing smile and the many cultures throughout the world that have been brought alive to us through her films. I'm grateful to have known her."

Borivoj and Vesna Dvornikovic, past and present Secretary Generals of ASIFA, Zagreb, Croatia, "We have lost a great artist and a wonderful person. The name Hubley is the symbol of the American and the world animation. It was Zagreb Animation Festival where we met Faith for the last time. We remember her smiling and having a wonderful time at the picnic, together with friends from all over the world. We will keep this nice picture in our memory forever."

Marcy Page, Montreal, "She was an extraordinary person and an inspiration to the independent animation community. I remember like yesterday when Fred Burns told me that John Hubley had died when I was assisting him on Hubley's *Doonesbury* special and thinking how unfair it was that the good ones were taken from us (it feels like that again). Despite John's death and Faith's incredible grief at the time the network did not give her a grace period on the production deadline. She was so incredibly strong to finish that one ...and to continue on with such prolific creation. We are lucky to have such a body of work from her and her family. She has certainly achieved her immortality."

TRIBUTES TO FAITH HUBLEY ARE PLANNED FOR

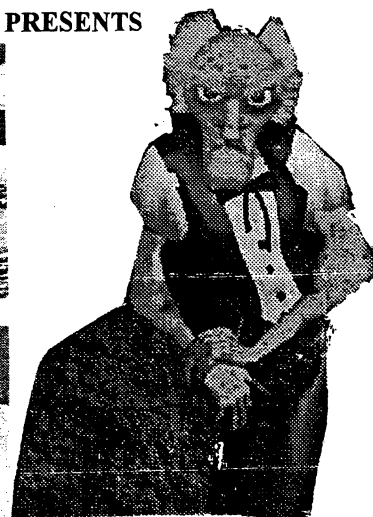
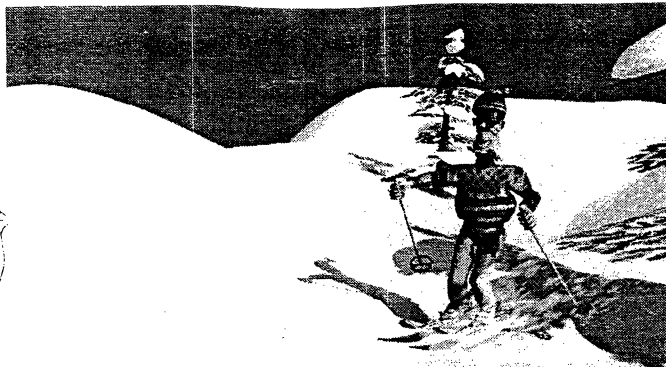
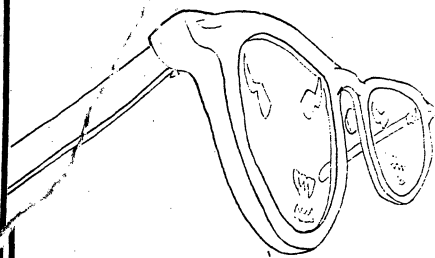
SF AND NYC ASIFA-SF will screen a segment of a documentary about her at our open screening event at the Exploratorium on Wed. Jan. 16, free.

The SF Museum of Modern Art has a screening of her work set for Tuesday, Jan. 8. It will include the local premiere of her last work "Northern Ice, Golden Sun" and other works.

A celebration of her life and work will be held at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St., New York City, on Jan. 8.

Donation in her honor can be made to the Jazz Foundation of America, 322 W. 48th St., NY, NY 10036, (212) 245-3999.

ASIFA-SF, THE BAY AREA'S ANIMATION ASSOCIATION, PRESENTS



Left to right:

SEE THE TRUTH by Jerold Howard

THE DAYDREAMER by John Atkinson

IN THE VAULT by Geoffrey Clark

ANNUAL OPEN SCREENING FOR SHORTS BY INDEPENDENT AND STUDENT ANIMATORS

PLUS AN EXCERPT FROM A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT THE LATE FAITH HUBLEY
from "Faith Hubley: Inspiration," *Animated Women* series, 1994, produced/directed by Patty Wineapple & Sybil DelGaudio

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 7:30 PM
AT THE EXPLORATORIUM, PUBLIC INVITED, FREE

NEW WORKS AND WORK-IN-PROGRESS

Geoffrey Clark, *IN THE VAULT*, a 3d cgi adaptation of a short story by H. P. Lovecraft. An undertaker becomes locked in his burial vault overnight... geoffclark.homestead.com

Nik Phelps of the Sprockets Ensemble will show two or three films he is creating soundtracks for. His work-in-progress includes scores for **Shirley Smith**, *THE LOST SOCK*, an offbeat, humorous traditional cel animated work and a surprise or two by **Nina Paley**.

Jerold Howard, *SEE THE TRUTH*, a stop-motion short shot in 35mm. This is a personal film by a talented artist who works commercially on stop-motion TV shows.

Stefan Gronsky, *THE BOX*, direct from 43 film festivals! 2nd place winner at Anamundi in Brazil, winner of a Bill Plympton drawing at Woodstock and many other honors. Gronsky made the work at home on his Mac. He is just finishing a computer degree at UC Berkeley.

John Atkinson, *THE DAYDREAMER*, 3D cgi, grand festival award for animation at the Berkeley Film and Video Festival, silver award in animation at Crested Butte Reel Festival, shown at SIGGRAPH 2001, on Tech-TV, etc. "An office worker doing battle with some highly assertive fantasies." atkinsonproductions.com

■ plus additional surprises

Anyone with an animated work on 16mm or VHS or 3/4" tape is welcome to bring it unannounced the night of the show and we will show it.

a brief annual business meeting will be held at 7:20 for ASIFA members
open screening for professional animation studios will be on Wednesday, Feb. 20

DISNEY HAS RELEASED DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF "THE THREE LITTLE PIGS," SOME HAVE AN ANTI-SEMITIC STEREOTYPE IN THEM An anti-Semitic "joke" showing the wolf disguised as a Jewish peddler was in the original cartoon. It was reanimated in the 1940's so the cartoon would no longer be offensive to some people. In the late 1990's the home video contained the original image "by mistake" (with the late 40's soundtrack). After protests by Jewish groups Disney said they would replace the offensive sequence with the acceptable 40's version. (Did they?) Recently several ASIFA members have reported the laser disc "The Three Little Pigs and other Silly Symphonies" has the original visuals with the original voice track. Paul Mular reports the DVD version has Leonard Maltin introducing the cartoon, explaining how the original sequence was replaced in the 1940's and he shows a still of the anti-Semitic wolf. Mular wonders why Disney had Maltin explain the problem when the version of the film on the DVD is the later version.

Mular made an interesting observation about the difference in print quality between the DVD and laser disc versions. Both are excellent, but the DVD version ("Disney Treasures - Silly Symphonies") is digitally re-mastered. While the process removes all blemishes, it also changes colors, textures and sharpens up edges. The process gives the illusion the films are new computer generated productions and not old classics. He was bothered by the new look.

JOB OPENING FOR AN ANIMATION/DIGITAL ARTS TEACHER at University of Southern California, Los Angeles. Start July 1, 2002. Salary commensurate with experience (open rank, tenure track). Experimental animator-artist with MFA or equivalent, and a record of achievement in innovative research/creative work. Prior teaching experience required,

including experimental practice in traditional and non-traditional media, especially character, experimental and computer animation for film and video. In-depth practical and theoretical knowledge of contemporary animation/digital arts concepts and processes required, including 2-D and 3-D computer graphics. Knowledge of Alias Wavefront Maya software and experience with emerging forms such as CD ROMs, websites, multimedia performance/installation, and digital visual effects, preferred. Ability to address multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary issues within the context of an internationally oriented program, as well as the impact of digital technology on narrative and non-objective animation is necessary. Willingness to work with industry, academia and the fine arts in developing the program is essential. Prior administrative experience is helpful but not essential. Application deadline: postmarked by February 1, 2002. Submit a letter of application, full curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and portfolio samples to: Vibeke Sorensen, Search Committee Chair, Division of Animation and Digital Arts, School of Cinema-Television, University of Southern California, 90089-2211; Fax: 213-740-5869; Phone: 213-740-3986. USC is an AA/EOE.

HAVE YOU VISITED THE INTERNATIONAL ASIFA WEB SITE WITH NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD? Visit asifa.net if you want informative news from the 4 corners of the animation world. There are regular news updates, animation festival information including reviews of past events and the dates and details about up-coming ones, links to animators, and other features. Some are in operation, others are planned. One feature to open soon is a shop where international members will be able to advertise art work, video tapes and other things for sale. Your international membership dues support this fine service which is run by Thomas Renoldner in Vienna, Austria.

ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO
PO Box 14516
San Francisco, CA 94114



6/30/2002 Local
John Peterson
12 Bishop Lane
Menlo Park, CA 94025

This issue was edited by Karl Cohen. Contributors include Ed Hooks, Lee Marrs, Bob Ingold, Jerry Beck, Tsvika Oren, Tom Sito, Adrienne Crew, Karen Jacobs, Chris Robinson, Bill Plympton, Chris Lanier, John Canemaker, David Ehrlich, Marcy Page, Borivoj and Vesna Dovnikovic plus a few people whose comments remain anonymous. Thanks to all of you, plus the staff of AWN.COM and others for making this a really informative issue. Thanks also to our production crew: Pete Davis, Philip Malkin, Shirley Smith, Ron Seawright, Tara Packard, Nancy Phelps and Laura Tulloss.

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ASIFA

SAN FRANCISCO

The International Film Association
P.O. Box 14516 • San Francisco, CA 94114

MARCH, 2002



THE
TENDENCY
IS TO
FORGET
JUST HOW
BIG OUR
MOUTH
CAVITY
IS...



AND HOW SMALL
IT CAN APPEAR.

ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO PRESENTS

RICHARD WILLIAMS DISCUSSING HIS NEW BOOK

*The Animator's Survival Kit: A Manual of Methods,
Principles and Formulas for Classical, Computer, Games,
Stop Motion and Internet Animators*

**** A TALK, SCREENING AND BOOK SIGNING ****

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

**THE EXPLORATORIUM, 7:30 PM, FREE
EXCLUSIVE SEATING FOR OUR MEMBERS AND
THEIR GUESTS UNTIL 7:25 PM
(A TICKET IS NEEDED) NON-MEMBERS GET ANY
REMAINING SEAT AVAILABLE**

Join us as we welcome back to San Francisco the celebrated animator Richard Williams. Richard will show the opening of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, discuss his work and his new book and run other video clips. He'll demonstrate how animators make animated characters walk and talk. The session will end with a short question and answer session followed by a book signing. Copies will be available for purchase at the event. Prescott Wright, who honored Williams by including his work in several of the Tournee of Animation shows in the 1970's and early 80's, will introduce the program.

"THE ANIMATOR'S SURVIVAL KIT" BY RICHARD WILLIAMS, THE MOST VALUABLE HOW TO ANIMATE BOOK YOU WILL EVER WANT TO OWN by Karl Cohen (an excerpt of a longer review to published February 15 by awn.com) Richard Williams' *The Animator's Survival Kit: A Manual of Methods, Principles and Formulas for Classical, Computer, Games, Stop Motion and Internet Animators*, 352 pages, Faber and Faber, London and New York, 2001, available in hardback (\$50) and paperback (\$30).

This book should be a "must have" for every animator from struggling students to seasoned professionals. It should provide the present and future generations of animators the working methods and drawing techniques that will enable the art of animation to grow and prosper.

Williams' book may seem deceptively simple at first because the focus is developing useful work habits that allow you to produce the best possible movements. He doesn't have chapters on character design, costumes, set design, budgets, and other important ingredients of an animated film. Most of the 352 pages are about drawing human and animal movements. You probably know most of the topics he covers: key drawings, extremes, breakdowns, timing, spacing, walks, runs, jumps, skips, flexibility, weight, anticipation, takes, dialogue, acting, animal action, directing, voice recording and many, many more. What may surprise you are his comments about each topic.

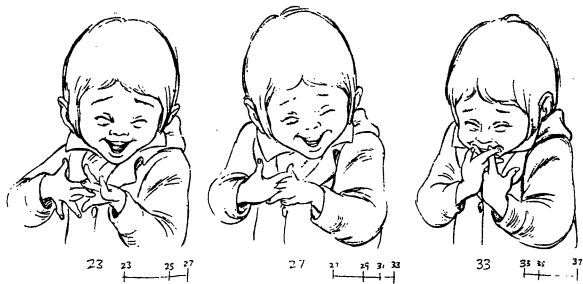
His first lesson is a valuable piece of advice - unplug! That's right, turn off your stereo or radio when you work and concentrate. The largest drawing in the book shows Milt Kahl at work at his drawing table and young Williams asking, "Milt, do you ever listen to classical music while you're working?" Turn the page and you find a giant 2 page illustration of Milt roaring, "of all the s-s-s-stupid god damned questions..." On the final page Milt tells a very small Williams cowering in the corner, "I'm not smart enough to think of more than one thing at a time!" The author says he took the advice and "my animation improved right away."

The book is about work methods. William's says "there are no rules - only methods... I really do think that - apart from your talent, brain and skill - fifty percent of the excellence in your work comes from your working method: the way you think about it, and the way you go about it."

Some of the wisdom in this book is attributed to the men who were Williams' masters. There are wonderful moments that give glimpses into their work ethics, like Ken Harris telling him, "come on, now, you can have fun doing the drawings later, but the important part first - time it all out." In his discussion of the use of ones and twos he tells us, "Art Babbitt used to nag at me for using ones, 'That's too realistic - one of the things about animation is that it's *not* like life!' But I would often add ones to Art's work when he wasn't looking and it came out better - and he liked it better."

A great deal of the book is spent on walks because, as Ken Harris put it, "A walk is the first thing to learn. Learn walks of all kinds, 'cause walks are about the toughest things to do right." He tells how Art Babbitt taught him to study people from behind and "follow them along and ask yourself: are they old? Young? What's their financial position? State of health? Are they strict? Permissive? Depressed? Hopeful? Sad? Happy? Drunk? Then run around to see the front and check." I think Babbitt's questions give a good idea at how complex and expressive walks can be. Williams really covers the subtle nuances of body movements to give you the best education he can.

Related to walks and runs are sections on dancing, the movement of athletes and other activities. There are discussions



about head movements and expressive uses of arms and hands. His discussion of flexibility in the face includes some of the most amusing drawings in the book.

The book doesn't cover how to animate robots, spiders, crabs, car crashes, explosions and a lot of other non-human things. It doesn't tell how the Japanese make female eyes sexy or how Harman-Ising made their animals so awfully cute. And there is no reason it has to cover any of those things.

My only negative criticism are two minor points in his brief encapsulation of animation history. He paints a vivid picture of several key events, but at least one date is off by a year and he makes a questionable statement about *The Yellow Submarine* (1967).

Williams has written and illustrated a brilliant volume and I suspect it will become as highly regarded as Frank and Ollie's *The Illusion of Life*. I suspect it may be several decades before anyone tries to improve upon this work.

THE FIRST PRINTING OF RICHARD WILLIAMS' BOOK IS SELLING OUT! The publisher has sold out in England and Canada and US sales are brisk. More copies were being printed to meet the sale demands. Amazon.com in UK reported it was #170 on their sales chart at the end of January. ASIFA-SF will have copies available for sale at William's talk on March 29.

GEOFFREY CLARK HAS SOME GREAT NEWS ABOUT HIS WORK *In The Vault* will be on a Tech TV (cable channel) show called "Dash's Animation House." The series was set to premiere in February. They have an open call for submissions at www.techtv.com/dash

Clark was interviewed for an upcoming issue of *3D World*, a UK magazine that has worldwide distribution. The illustrated article will discuss *In The Vault* and some of his earlier work. The issue is slated to come out at the end of February.

Geoffrey Clark is a computer artist and animator who works for The 3DO Company, Inc. *In The Vault* was shown at our January event. Clark can be reached at (650) 385-2174

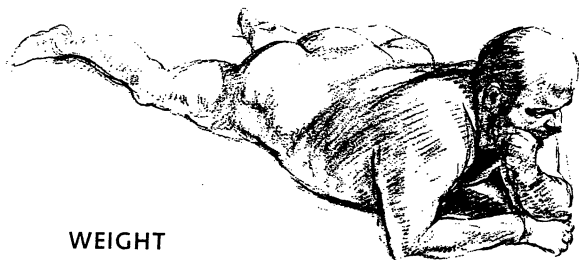
PIXAR TO RECEIVE THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA FIRST VANGUARD AWARD. Pixar is being honored for their significant contributions in the field of computer graphic imaging technology since its inception 15 years ago. Pixar created the first computer generated feature, *Toy Story* in 1995, and their "RenderMan software propelled computer graphics into mainstream movie-making by allowing computer generated images to blend in seamlessly with live-action scenes. RenderMan has been used in 26 of the last 30 films nominated for a visual effects Oscar, including *Gladiator*, *The Matrix*, *Titanic* and *Jurassic Park*." Ed Catmull, John Lasseter and Steve Jobs will accept the award on behalf of Pixar at the awards ceremony in Los Angeles on March 3.

BAY AREA HAS ITS SHARE OF OSCAR NOMINATIONS IN ANIMATION AND SPECIAL EFFECTS A nomination for **Best Animated Short Film** went to *For The Birds* by Ralph Eggleston from Pixar. The other nominated animated shorts are: *Fifty Percent Grey* by Ruairi Robinson and Seamus Byrne from Ireland; *Give Up Yer Aul Sins* by Cathal Gaffney and Darragh O'Connell, *Strange Invaders* by Canadian Cordell "Cat Came Back" Barker, and *Stubble Trouble* by Joseph Merideth of Calabash in Chicago.

Two of the three nominations for **Best Animated Feature** went to Bay Area productions: *Shrek* from PDI and *Monsters, Inc.* from Pixar. The third feature nominated in this category is *Jimmy Neutron*. *Shrek* was also nominated for **Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material Previously Produced or Published** and *Monsters, Inc.* got nominations for **Best Sound Editing** (by Skywalker Sound), **Best Song** and **Best Musical Score**. ILM received nominations for **Best Visual Effects** for *AI: Artificial Intelligence* and *Pearl Harbor*. Skywalker Sound also received a nomination for **Best Sound Editing** on *Pearl Harbor*.

DID YOU STUDY AT SF STATE? THEN THEY MAY WANT TO SHOW YOUR ANIMATION FRIDAY, MARCH 22 This is a call to all former students. There will be a reception at 6 and screening at 7. Everybody is invited to attend this free event. Patricia Amlin says it should be a lot of fun and you may run into old friends. Contact her if you have an old or new work to show (415) 239-8151 amlin@sfsu.edu

VISIT OUR WEB SITE - ASIFA-SF.ORG



CAN WE RESERVE A COPY OF RICHARD WILLIAMS' BOOK FOR YOU? WE NEED TO KNOW HOW MANY TO ORDER FOR HIS BOOK SIGNING

Let us know by March 5 if you will want a soft-cover (\$30) or hard-cover (\$50). Call Karl Cohen (10 AM to 9 PM) before Tues. March 5 (415) 386-1004 or e-mail karlcohen@earthlink.net We will order a few extras for people who forget to call. Prescott Wright will be getting the books and running the event. Cohen will be in NYC talking at the Museum on Natural History when Williams is here. Copies of the books bought elsewhere will be signed by the author.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED to help the night of the event. Call Prescott at (415) 864-5779 if you can help.

THE CARTOON ART MUSEUM IS EXHIBITING DREAMTIME/WARTIME: THE COMICS OF ALEKSANDAR ZOGRAF Feb 16 - April 14 with a slide presentation by the artist on March 23 at 7:00 PM. Aleksandar Zograf is a Serbian cartoonist whose comics about the Balkan conflict have been published in the US, Brazil, and several European countries. During the NATO bombing of Serbia (Zograf's apartment had a CNN-camera-worthy view of the burning industrial zone in his town, a repeated target of the NATO planes), Zograf began a weekly strip called "Regards from Serbia." The strip was sent electronically to a number of newspapers and alternative weeklies in the US and Europe, where they were often printed the same week they were drawn. His comics, which have always exhibited a fascination with dream imagery and unusual psychic states, are unerringly tuned to the grim absurdity of living under a quasi-dictatorship, in an atmosphere choked with propagandistic lies and senseless ethnic hatreds. The work is part autobiography, part reportage, and part dream-analysis of the collective Serbian unconscious. The exhibition will feature examples of "Regards from Serbia," as well as original art from his other publications including "Dream Watcher," "Life Under Sanctions," and his mini-comics.

Mr. Zograf will present a slide show on March 23rd at 7 pm followed by a reception at the museum. The presentation and reception are free and open to the public. This exhibition is sponsored by ArtsLink, a program of CEC International Partners. At 655 Mission Street, between 3rd and New Montgomery Streets cartoonart.org

ALSO ON EXHIBIT AT THE MUSEUM IS "CALVIN AND HOBBS: SUNDAY PAGES 1985-1995" TO APRIL 14

"METROPOLIS" IS A SPECIAL VISUAL TREAT WORTH SEEING IN THEATRES The distributor just wrote us, "Due to a continued strong box-office performance, Columbia Tristar Home Entertainment has changed the DVD & VHS release date for Osamu Tezuka's acclaimed Japanese anime film *Metropolis* to April 23, 2002 (it was previously scheduled to street on March 12)."

When it was supposed to open in Nov., (but didn't) I wrote **NEW FROM JAPAN, "METROPOLIS"** This is a spectacular looking work on video and I suspect it will be even more visually stunning on a big screen. It is based on a manga by the late Osamu Tezuka and was adopted for the screen by Katsuhiro Otomo (director of *Akira*). The sci-fi story was inspired by Lang's *Metropolis*, with the workers living underground and the rich living in skyscrapers.

If you enjoy anime with spectacular sets and first rate art direction plus lots of action, this film is a must see. I was impressed with most of it and when my viewing was interrupted by the phone, I couldn't wait to get back to it. It is a great yarn, but I wish the script had stronger character development and was clear about what motivated them. Still, the film was a lot more engaging than 95% of the films I saw last summer. Print is in Japanese with English subtitles. KC

"METROPOLIS" BY CHRIS LANIER Rin Taro's *Metropolis* isn't up to the level of top-tier anime, but it's well worth a visit, especially on the big screen -- visually gorgeous with plenty of fertile involutions of style. A Fleischer Brothers "cartoony" look is used for the sympathetic characters, re-imported to theatrical animation by way of Osamu Tezuka, who took the Fleischer style and built an entire comics-and-animation empire out of it. The storyline is based on an old manga by Osamu Tezuka, reportedly inspired when Tezuka saw a poster for the original "Metropolis" -- without ever seeing the actual movie.

At any rate, that elliptical inspiration provides another occidental style boomeranged through Japan -- the soaring skylines of "Metropolis" are sharply deco. Much of the background and machinery of the futuristic city is rendered in 3-D computer animation. It's a bit jarring in places, but the verve with which the animation styles are squashed together makes it come off (a bit like the Tsui Hark-produced animated version of *Chinese Ghost Story* that showed up on screen in San Francisco a couple years ago, though altogether more accomplished). Yet another argument that the quest for a synthetic "realism" through 3-D CGI is an aesthetic dead-end.

The inventive approach to the 3-D usage is signaled straight off the bat, where the chrome surfaces of the *Metropolis*, rendered in their clean architectural details, rather than being treated to the grandiose swoopy treatment that such imaginary architecture usually inspires, is shot in a rushed and fragmentary way, abstracting the surfaces and colors for several seconds, strobing and shifting to the rhythms of the music. The buildings are eventually given that grandiose swoopy treatment -- but how exciting that the film first treats it like a couple bars of Fischinger's "visual music."

The attention paid to detail is staggering: from carefully painted peeling posters pasted to corroded metal walls, to throwaway ideas like a hotel made out of repurposed vintage locomotive cars, to the occasional droll movement or gesture -- a book page that stubbornly springs up to the place where it was well-creased.

And there are several poetic touches -- a throne receding into darkness, hair that seems to spring to its own organic life -- that effectively punctuate the overpowering, stuffed-to-the-gills clutter of the "set design."

It also has a killer soundtrack -- in tune with the retro-future storyline, it's mostly Dixieland jazz. And the climax is an absolutely nutty (which is to say absolutely perfect) melding of visuals and anarchnonistic music (although, since the whole world of "Metropolis" is an anachronism, this is probably a distinction of no distinction).

As to the story? Well, how much you'll like it depends on your tolerance for the sorts of stories that only make sense on a baldly symbolic level. (Why would a political leader make the last component of his doomsday weapon a simulacrum of his dead child, with an unpredictable personality, to boot? How do all the main characters manage to keep bumping into each other, in various dramatic configurations, in a city built to dwarf all cities?)

Fortunately, for me at least, there was just enough traction to the symbolic order of things that it kept me engaged, and, in the climactic ending, absolutely enthralled.

LOCAL SCREENINGS

Sunday, March 3, **CORDELL BARKER IN-PERSON AT THE RED VIC**, showing his Oscar nominated **CAT CAME BACK**, 1988 and his new nominated short, **STRANGE INVADERS**, 11:30 am, a last minute, free, ASIFA-SF event!

Friday, March 8 - Monday, March 11, **WAKING LIFE**, 7:15 & 9:25 plus afternoon shows on Sat. & Sunday, Red Vic

Friday March 8 at 9:45 PM and Tues. March 12 at 8:45 PM, **GORDON THOMAS' PEDRO + TONY** and other shorts with an edge at the Kabuki, Asian American Film Festival.

Thurs. March 21, **SPROCKETS ENSEMBLE - IDEAS IN ANIMATION**, live music with new short films, Parkway Theatre, 1834 Park Blvd., Oakland, 7:30 and 9:30 pm

Friday, March 22, **AN ALUMNI ANIMATION SCREENING AT S.F. STATE** Reception at 6, screening at 7. Creative Arts 101 (Coppola Theatre). Free. If you went to State and have a new or old work to show (most formats can be shown) call Patricia Amlin (415) 239-8151 amlin@sfsu.edu

Monday, March 25, **SPROCKETS ENSEMBLE - IDEAS IN ANIMATION** live music with new short films, Minna Street Gallery, Minna near 2nd, 7:30 and 9:30 pm

Friday, March 29, 7:30 PM, **RICHARD WILLIAMS TALK AND BOOK SIGNING**, Exploratorium, free (see flyer for details)

NATIONAL NEWS

"INDEPENDENT SPIRITS: THE FAITH AND JOHN HUBLEY STORY" TO AIR ON PBS IN JUNE

This is the recently completed feature length documentary by Sybil Delgaudio and Patty Wineapple. It traces the Hubleys' lives and careers including how they redefined independent animation in the US in the 1950s.



WALLACE & GROMIT ARE RETURNING AS INTERNET STARS Twelve new Wallace and Gromit short films will soon be available on the Internet. Nick Park is in production on the 1-minute films, and each will feature his stars in amazing situations. The series will be called *Wallace's Workshop* and will begin to air this fall.

It sounds like you may have to go on an Internet treasure hunt to see the shorts. AWN reports, "Using the new Movie Album concept developed by Media Ideas Ltd., fans will visit chosen websites to collect a series of short film clips on a free CD-Rom album. Each collected set unlocks a whole film for viewing from the CD. A new film will be available for collection each weekend. Hopefully the shorts will be enough to satisfy fans until the new Wallace and Gromit film *The Great Vegetable Plot*, which Park is currently scripting, is released in a couple of years."

THE AMAZING, STUPENDOUS 10TH ANNUAL MIDWEST ANIMATORS CONFERENCE WILL BE APRIL 26-28 in Downers Grove, Illinois (somewhere west of Chicago). Each year animators thaw out and gather in the woods to enjoy speakers, screenings, demonstrations and general revelry. A promotion for the event has at the top of the list of seminar presenters **MIKE BELZER** of Walt Disney, Burbank, whose credits include *Nightmare Before Christmas*, *James and the Giant Peach* and *Dinosaurs*. (Yes, the same talented guy who worked here for many years.) While brave souls can camp out, there are modern accommodations available with saunas, 2 bedroom suites, etc. For details asifa.org/animate or (773) 779-1017



NEW VEGGIETALES FROM BIG IDEA PRODUCTIONS

Want to know what kind of animated products make big money? The publisher says "The unique blend of Sunday morning values and Saturday morning fun has made VeggieTales one of the most popular family video series in America, having sold over 25 million copies to date (since 1993). Hosted by Bob the Tomato and Larry the Cucumber, VeggieTales features top-quality computer animation, infectious songs and lovable characters while teaching timeless values and life lessons like honesty, kindness and forgiveness in a delightfully wacky way."

The new releases (available March 5, 2002) are two volumes of *VeggieTales* Heroes of the Bible!* They are produced by Big Idea Productions of Chicago. Each tape is 75 minutes long and they retail at \$19.99.

The company's copy also says "What do you get when you cross vegetables with classic Bible stories? You get courageous cucumbers, ambitious asparagus - you get heroes of epic proportions! *VeggieTales Heroes of the Bible!* is the first VeggieTales video compilation showcasing everyone's favorite Bible story adaptations selected from the various fifteen VeggieTales videos treasured by families over the past 10 years." There are 3 episodes on each videocassette. Apparently the animation is done in-house.

TOM SITO COMPILES UNUSUAL INFORMATION ABOUT ANIMATION HISTORY

He notes that in January, 1938, the first true animator, Emile Cohl, died while enroute to the Paris premiere of Disney's *Snow White*. He writes, "Cohl was so poor that the electricity in his flat had been turned off and the candles had ignited his beard. Angry he was never recognized in his time, he once said: 'the French prefer their artists with marble and flowers on top.'"



XETH E-MAILED US ABOUT HIS QUEER ANIMAL FRIENDS

He said "As many of you know, *Queer Duck* is back! **Sho.com** is now airing 20 episodes online, starting with the five classics from last year. You can also catch the episodes on Showtime after *Queer As Folk*, every Tuesday night. Written and created by Emmy-winner Mike

Reiss (*The Critic*, *The Simpsons*), *Queer Duck* tells you everything you need to know about gay cartoon animals. Directed, designed and animated by Xeth Feinberg, Mishmash Media."

**MEET SIGNE BAUMANE
FROM LATVIA, BILL
PLYMPTON'S NAUGHTY
ASSISTANT by Karl Cohen**

Signe Baumanne and Josh Rechnitz from New York were in San Francisco to take a few bows in February at the Indie Fest. They created *Natasha*, a funny sophisticated risqué short that is a real audience pleaser. The 9 minute film mixes her European sensibilities with his background as a cartoonist who loves wild and often violent animated films. While she said it was difficult at times for her to accept some of his suggestions, the results is an excellent blend of comedy that mixes dry wit with moments of extreme insanity.



The couple met at Bill Plympton's studio. She has been assisting on his shorts and features for over 5 years. She makes Xerox cels of his drawings, paints them and does whatever else is needed. Josh joined the staff as a cel washer. He cleans them before they are sent to the camera department. She also teaches animation at Pratt Institute. Josh say he has been drawing cartoons since the 5th grade and he grew up in the wilds of the Jersey suburbs "eating sugared cereals and watching cartoons on TV with my identical twin brother." He contributed a strong traditional narrative structure to the film. Signe's earlier works have looser story structures.

When they decided to work on a project together, they spent a long time deciding who their characters would be, how they would act and how they would look. When they finally made up their minds about their traits and appearances, Signe decided the woman would be named Natasha. That proved to be a problem for them later on when the work was accepted by the Krok Festival last year. When they arrived at the festival they found out it wasn't scheduled to be shown! A staff member named Natasha was sure it was about her! (It was eventually shown.) They also upset a woman named Natasha from New Jersey who was sure they were making fun of her compulsive habit of constantly cleaning her home.

Are you wondering what cleaning house has to do with sex? In the film *Natasha's* male partner spends his time watching wrestling on TV. She escapes his world by cleaning house and in the process she finds sexual fulfillment with her vacuum cleaner. It is a long outrageous sequence (probably inspired by Plympton's humor and pacing) that is tasteful enough to delight mature intelligent audiences. This strange coupling results in... You will have several chances to find out what happens as Sprockets Ensemble will be performing a new score by Nik Phelps with it at their upcoming events.

Signe was born in Auce, Latvia, 1964. Although she graduated from Moscow University in philosophy, she accepted an apprentice job in 1989 at an animation studio when she returned home. She says she loved to draw as a kid, but couldn't get a college education in animation in Latvia because it wasn't taught there. Animation in Latvia under the communists received very little financial support so artists interested in learning how to do it were self-taught.

Her apprenticeship was with Dauka Animation Studio, a small state supported workshop run by a couple. The husband directed his film projects for 6 months and then his wife directed her projects. She was with the firm two years later when Latvia's Communist government collapsed. She began to supported herself by working on local commercials that didn't pay much, but allowed her the chance to learn, experiment and to do her first personal films. She also worked for a puppet theater and as a writer/illustrator (her *The Book of Tigers* was published in Moscow, 1993).

Since moving to New York in 1995, she has completed 4 personal films and apparently all include her delightful brand of dry risqué humor. *Natasha* took two years to make and was completed

early last summer. Her latest film, *Five Fucking Fables*, was just finished and number 5 has been started. *Natasha* has already been shown by festivals in Latvia, Sweden, Brussels, Woodstock, NY; Orlando, FL and in other parts of the world. Hopefully it will be packaged someday with other sophisticated erotic films for screenings in theaters and/or on TV. Signe can also visualize a *Natasha* series based on the characters already developed. It might be too daring for N. American TV, but several European nations show cutting edge films on TV that are sexually explicit and outrageous.

While the art world in Europe is beginning to recognize Signe as a successful Latvian animator, she says she wants to continue working and developing her art here. She prefers the challenges still confronting her in America. Examples of the pairs' work can be seen at lovenatasha.com

UNDERSTANDING HER ALLEGORICAL ART

Since completing the above part of this article I have enjoyed seeing 4 of her earlier works. The two made in Latvia are quite different from the way most Americans approach writing a script.

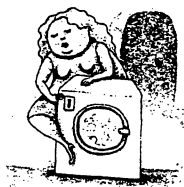
Her first work, *The Witch and the Cow*, 1991 is an allegorical tale loaded with scatological humor. It appears to be about the break-up of the Soviet Union. The animation and script are quite simple. The film stars a tiny witch and a giant cow that could represent the Soviet Union in a series of humorous blackout situations. Finally the witch destroys the symbolic animal and out pours 100s of miniature versions of the creature from the fatal wound.

Tiny Shoes, 1993, which won the Grand Prix at the International Women's Film Festival in Minsk in 1995, has a more sophisticated story structure. It too is an allegory. I assume some people see it and say they know exactly what it is about, although each may have a different interpretation, while others will say it is confusing and pointless. While I enjoy mental puzzles, many Americans are not used to these films and simply write them off.

I sent Signe my comments and she wrote back, "I was quite astonished when you wrote that you thought *The Witch and The Cow* was about Gorbachov and the collapsing Soviet Union. A lot of people at that time (1991) said the same thing, but they were in Eastern Europe, much closer in time and space than you. (I have to admit, I am not used to Americans being able to solve allegory puzzles.) In truth, the film is about me, my vain attempts to get milk out of reality. If there is shit, it is too much. If there is milk, it is also too much. What do you do with a Cow like that? Or a Witch? Far fetched, huh?

As for *Tiny Shoes*, that is all about marriage - having been married twice, I think I know a little something. The Prince is woman's ideal Man, the Dragon is the Man she gets -a real man. How do you like that?"

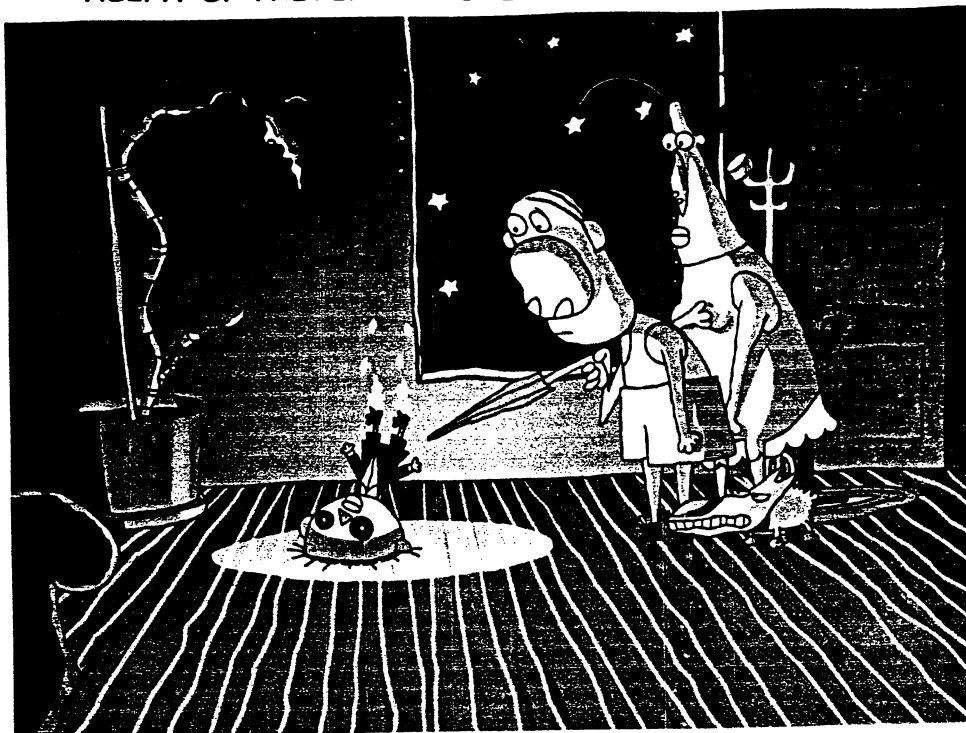
She also mentioned she recently got "a grant from the Latvian government to make another allegorical film there, on Latvian soil, so I'll be gone for the whole summer."



DISNEY TO RELEASE "TREASURE PLANET" IN 70 AND 35MM NOVEMBER, 2002 Due to the success of *Fantasia 2000* and *Beauty and the Beast* at IMAX theaters, Disney has announced their upcoming animated feature *Treasure Planet* will be released simultaneously in 35mm and in 70mm for large format venues. This will be the first major studio feature to be released in both formats at the same time.

The film is being directed by John Musker and Ron Clements, the team responsible for *The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin* and *Hercules*. It will feature the voices of Emma Thompson, David Hyde Pierce and Martin Short. The story is based on Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, but it is moved into the future and set in outer space.

ASIFA-SF PRESENTS A GREAT LAST MINUTE EVENT



CORDELL '*CAT CAME BACK*' BARKER
PRESENTING IN-PERSON

STRANGE INVADERS

Nominated for Best Animated Short

Sunday, March 3, 11:30 AM

At the Red Vic Movie House, 1727 Haight St, Free

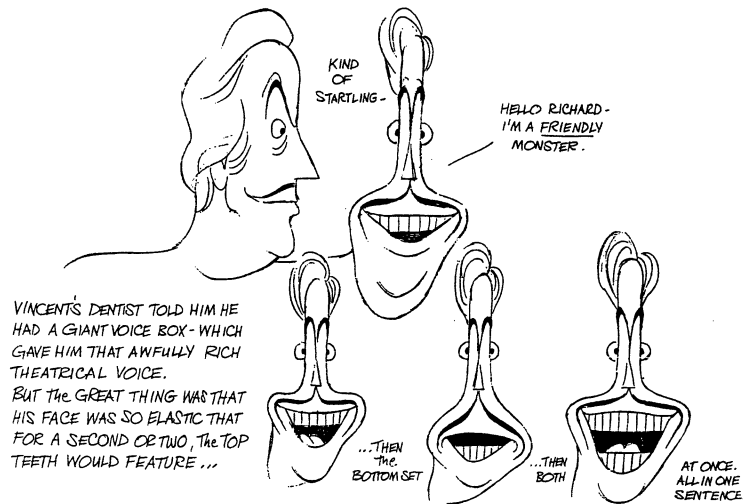
Shown in 35 mm on a big screen along with his hilarious
The Cat Came Back and possibly some surprises.

"Is it a gift from the heavens or... Anyone planning a family - take heed of this cautionary tale! Doomed parents will appreciate the terror of the couple's plight. Part science-fiction, part autobiography, *Strange Invaders* is another irrepressible comedy from Cordell Barker, director of the much-loved classic, *The Cat Came Back*." Cordell will answer questions about ufo's, story structure, life in Winnipeg, what happened to his career in 1989 after *Cat Came Back* won an Oscar nomination and 18 international awards, and other questions you have always wanted to ask. His new film has already won 8 major international awards (Annecy, New York, Leipzig, etc.).

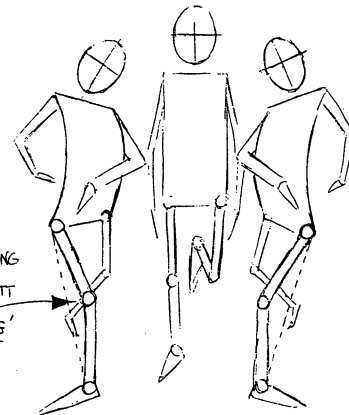
ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO PRESENTS

The MOST FUN I'VE HAD WITH LIP SYNC SO FAR WAS WITH VINCENT PRICE'S VOICE -
BECAUSE HE HAD SUCH A MOBILE FACE, MOUTH, JAWS and THROAT.
FROM THE SIDE HE LOOKED AS YOU'D EXPECT, BUT WHEN HE TURNED TO THE FRONT HE LOOKED LIKE A FISH.

WE'RE GOING TO 'BREAK' THE LEG.
WE'RE GOING TO BEND IT WHETHER IT WOULD BEND THAT WAY OR NOT.



WE'RE DOING WHAT ART BABBITT CALLS 'BREAKING' THE JOINT



IT LOOKS WEIRD ENOUGH, BUT IF WE DRAW A BALLET DANCER ON TOP OF IT, IT LOOKS JUST FINE.

RICHARD WILLIAMS

DISCUSSING HIS NEW BOOK

The Animator's Survival Kit: A Manual of Methods, Principles and Formulas for Classical, Computer, Games, Stop Motion and Internet Animators



STRETCH IT TO MAKE IT AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE FACE.

**** A TALK. SCREENING AND BOOK SIGNING ****

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

THE EXPLORATORIUM, 7:30 PM, FREE

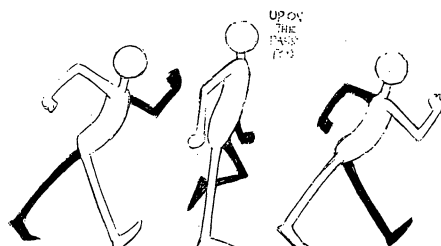
**EXCLUSIVE SEATING FOR OUR MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS UNTILL 7:25 PM
(A TICKET IS NEEDED) NON-MEMBERS GET ANY REMAINING SEAT AVAILABLE**



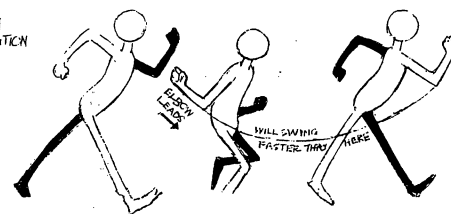
HE ADJUSTS HIMSELF SO AS TO NOT DAMAGE HIMSELF, HE DOESN'T WANT A HERNIA.

Join us as we welcome back to San Francisco the celebrated animator Richard Williams. He will introduces his new book *The Animator's Survival Kit*. Copies will be available for purchase at the event. Richard's presentation is called "The Animators' Survival Kit - Why This Book?" and runs about an one hour. He will show the opening of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, discuss his work and his new book and run other video clips. He'll demonstrate how animators make animated characters walk and talk. The session will end with a short question and answer session followed by a book signing. Prescott Wright, who honored Williams by including his work in several of the Tournee of Animation shows in the 1970's and early 80's, will introduce the program.

SAY WE HAVE A KIND OF ANGRY WALK - WE'D NORMALLY DO THIS:



BUT LOOK WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DO JUST 2 THINGS -



STUDIO THAT CREATED "FINAL FANTASY" SET TO CLOSE Square Co., Ltd. of Tokyo created the Honolulu studio, Square USA. Unless they find new financing by the end of March, the studio will close. They have about 125 employees. AWN reports Square USA will complete its current project, a 10-minute segment of computer animation for the *Matrix* sequel, prior to closing.

FUTURAMA'S FUTURE ISN'T TOO BRIGHT Fox says *Futurama* has not been renewed for the 2003 - 2004 season. The Annie Award winning comedy series by Matt Groening has been renewed for 4 seasons. The most recent episodes made by Rough Draft will air in the coming months. Fox says they may eventually order more episodes.

EMPLOYMENT

SAN FRANCISCO STATE'S CINEMA DEPT. SEEKS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN ANIMATION The cinema department has a full-time tenure-track position open. Candidates should have a MFA or equivalent, teaching experience at the university level, a body of independent work and knowledge of traditional and computer techniques. They seek "an artist with personal vision." Apply by March 18, 2002. Send a letter of interest, resume, a sample reel on video or digital format, names and addresses of 3 professional references, to Steve Ujlaki, Animation Search Committee, Cinema Dept. San Francisco State University, 1600 Holloway, SF, CA 94132 For information to sujlaki@sfsu.edu

FESTIVALS

OTTAWA INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL, ONTARIO, CANADA DEADLINE IS JULY 1 for an October 2 to October 6 event. They seek both new independent and commercial work. The festival is held every other year and is the most important international animation festival in North America.

The 2000 edition received 1300 entries from 45 countries. They have added a non-narrative film category this year. Entry forms are available online or contact the office at (613) 232-8769. There is no entry fee. For more information contact the Ottawa International Animation Festival, 2 Daly Ave. Suite 120, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 6E2. awn.com/ottawa

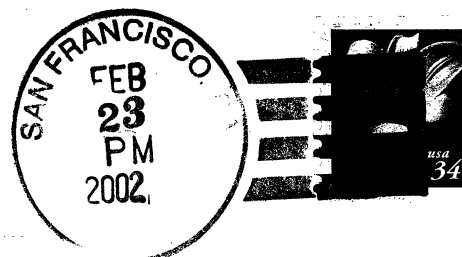
ANIMA MUNDI ANIMATION FESTIVAL, RIO DE JANEIRO AND SAO PAULO, BRAZIL, APRIL 15 DEADLINE for a July 12 to July 21 and July 24 to July 28, event. Anima Mundi is one of the world's largest animation festivals and the most important one in Latin America. Last year more than 60,000 people attended the event. There are both jury and audience awards. Entry forms and regulations are available online at animamundi.com.br.

SIGGRAPH 2002 CALL FOR ENTRIES has been announced. The annual event will be July 21 - July 26 in San Antonio, Texas. They seek new computer animation, papers, course proposals and much more. For details visit siggraph.org/s2002

THE 2002 ASIFA-EAST ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL Entries due Mon. March 4. Judging is later in March so late entries may be possible. Event is May 5 in NYC and show tours on video to several places. Entry fees range from \$5 for students to \$25/\$35 for independent shorts. Commercials and promos are \$20/\$30. They show excerpts of works over 15min. long and only looks at work on 1/2" VHS tape and 3/4" U-matic videocassette. For questions call Linda Simensky (404) 885-0821. For a copy of entry form call or e-mail me, Karl Cohen (415) 386-1004

23RD TELLY AWARDS DEADLINE MARCH 8 Not a festival. Nothing is shown to the public. For \$40 your work gets judged (by "top professionals") and about 500 trophies are sold to the lucky winners for \$120 each! Over 11,000 entries a year, so somebody is making \$\$\$\$. About 150 categories including animation. telly.com

ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO
PO Box 14516
San Francisco, CA 94114



6/30/2002 Local
John Peterson
12 Bishop Lane
Menlo Park, CA 94025

****YOUR TICKET FOR THE RICHARD WILLIAMS EVENT:**
CLIP OR BRING THIS PAGE TO THE PROGRAM
BEFORE 7:25 PM TO GET YOUR CHOICE OF SEATS

Not valid without our official stamp



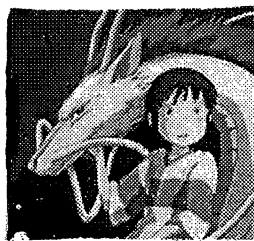
See Oscar nominated *Strange Invaders* by Cordell "Cat Came Back" Barker, In-Person, Sun. March 3, 11:45 AM at the Red Vic, free. Q and A session + his other work. 35mm screening.

ASIFA

SAN FRANCISCO

The International Film Association
P.O. Box 14516 • San Francisco, CA 94114

APRIL 2002



"SPIRITED AWAY" WILL BE SHOWN AT THE CASTRO THEATER, SATURDAY APRIL 20, AT 6:30 PM & SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 11:00 AM PLUS A BERKELEY SCREENING AT THE PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE MONDAY AT 9 PM Described as a "fabulous ghost-infested adventure full of action, suspense and a swarm of unusual creatures and compelling human characters, *Spirited Away* (*Sen To Chihiro No Kamikakushi*) is the pinnacle of imaginative animated fantasy by Japanimation master Hayao Miyazaki. The highest grossing film of all time in Japan. In Japanese with English subtitles. (2001 125min) The film, about a 10 year old child's search for her parents in the spirit world, has gotten dozens of rave reviews (many reprinted on the Internet). See article in this issue about Disney buying the rights to this film. This is a screening of a sub-titled version (a dubbed print will be released in the US later this year). Screening is part of the SF Film Festival.

The festival will present "By The Light Of The Silvery Toon," an animation compilation program featuring 10 shorts. They are *Black Soul*, *The Cat With Hands*, *Home Road Movies*, *Hubert's Brain* (Wild Brain), *Into The Dark*, *Love Is All*, *Rocks*, *Strange Invaders* (Cordell Barker, Oscar Nom.), *The Visit*, and *Vessel Wrestling*. Shows Sunday, April 21, at the Kabuki Theatre, 8:45 PM and Friday, April 26, Kabuki Theatre, 1:15 PM

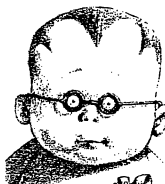
The festival is showing 2 other animated shorts. *A Conversation with Haris* by Sheila Sofian 6 min, is an ironic whimsical work that depicts the childhood of a boy who lost his family in the Serbo-Croatian war before he immigrating to the USA. It plays Wednesday, April 24, Kabuki Theatre 7 PM and Saturday, April 27 Pacific Film Archive at 2:30.

Copy Shop is an intriguing, troubling look at what happens when duplication goes awry. It is by Virgil Widrich, Austria 2001, 12 min. It plays Thursday, April 25 Kabuki Theatre 5:15 PM and Sunday, April 28 Kabuki 9:45 PM

Check to see what the festival is showing on closing night. They couldn't confirm it, but they may present the world premiere of a major animated feature.

STRANGE INVADERS WINS THE TOP ANIMATION PRIZE AT THIS YEAR'S GOLDEN GATE AWARDS

The Golden Gate Award goes to *Strange Invaders*, Cordell Barker, Canada; The Certificate of Merit to *Black Soul*, Martine Chartrand, Canada and a Certificate of Merit to *Into the Dark*, Dennis Tupicoff, Australia.



WILD BRAIN'S "HUBERT'S BRAIN" HAS NOW WON 10 MAJOR FESTIVAL PRIZES

In February director Phil Robinson was awarded a special jury prize at *Imagina*, the International Festival for Digital Images, Monaco. Previous awards include Annecy, "10 Best of Annecy"; World Animation Celebration, 1st place for Computer Animation; Asifa Hollywood Annie Awards, Outstanding Achievement in an Animated Short; Bradford Animation Festival, UK, Best Film for Children; Festival Synthesis, Belgium, 1st place in Fiction; Chicago Int'l Film Festival, Silver Plaque; Nashville Independent Film Festival (NIFF) Honorable Mention in Animation; San Sebastian Horror & Fantasy Film Festival, special jury prize, and 9th Raindance Film Festival, Honorable Mention in Fictional Shorts category.



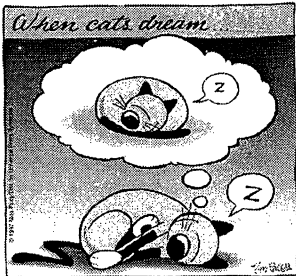
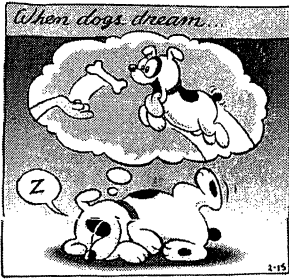
A NEW PIXAR SHORT WILL BE RELEASED ON TAPE AND DVD WITH "MONSTERS, INC." IN SEPTEMBER

Mike's New Car features the voices of John Goodman and Billy Crystal. "It is the story of a little girl who invades the monsters' realm and then teaches them a thing or two." The DVD will also include their Oscar nominated short *For the Birds*, animated outtakes, behind the scenes at Pixar (animation tests, etc.) plus a trailer for the next Pixar feature, *Finding Nemo*. The 2-disc DVD will retail at \$29.99. The film on VHS tape will retail at \$24.99.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ILM AND THE OTHER EFFECTS HOUSES THAT WORKED ON "TIME MACHINE"

Visually this is a magnificent production. The special effects are subtle, but impressive along with great sets, costumes and art direction. ILM was one of several companies that provided images for the film. They have 17 shots in the final work and several in the film's coming attraction trailer. All their work is in the Morlocks sequence.

My overall feeling about the film is another matter. It is a good, but not a great work. I felt the director making Guy Pierce's role so unemotional was a major mistake. I couldn't give a damn about the film's star. I didn't feel anything. I simply became a curious observer of the world like him. The film seemed emotionally dull until the drama with the Morlocks near the film's end. It finally gets exciting and becomes dark and heavy like a good monster or horror film. This change of pace came too late to save this work. KC



"THE FUNNY BUSINESS OF NINA PALEY" IS AN INFORMATIVE ARTICLE PUBLISHED BY APPLE.COM

The article by Stephanie Jorgl appeared in their Hot News section, February, 2002. It turns out she grew up across the street from a computer research lab at the University of Illinois and took advantage of their facilities. Her present project, *Thank You For Not Breeding*, is being done on a Power Mac with two Apple Studio Displays in her living room. There is a lot more information about Paley in the article, so check it out if you want to know more.

OUR WEB SITE IS PROVING TO BE A USEFULL ASSET Since going online in January, 2000 we have had almost 150,000 hits, have averaged about 850 sessions a month and the statistics show a lot of information has been downloaded. Michael Nolan, our new web-master, is doing a fine job keeping the information current including posting last-minute events. **For useful animation information visit: asifa-sf.org**

"SUPERWACKY: ANIMATION ON TELEVISION 1949-2002" AT THE CARTOON ART MUSEUM **October 5 – January 12, 2003** The exhibition examines the history of cartoons made for television. Included are over 125 vintage production cels, character sketches, concept drawings and rare painted background art from over 25 animation studios including Disney, Filmation, Hanna-Barbera, Terrytoons, Jay Ward, and Warner Bros. This exhibition is presently on display at The Fullerton Museum Center.

note: *Crusader Rabbit*, TV's first animated series, wasn't broadcast anywhere on a regular basis until 1950. The 1949 date is an error passed down from book to book by authors who don't check their facts. It is based on the pilot having a 1949 copyright and it being shown at a promotional party for potential buyers and the press in '49 (not a scheduled TV broadcast). This is a minor point, but since the show was created in the Bay Area by people I know and like, it would be nice if our local museum got the date correct and also honored Lucille Bliss (the voice of the rabbit) and Alex Anderson (the creator of the series and **the father of limited animation**) while the show is on display.

TWO ACADEMY OF ART STUDENTS ARE RUNNING THE SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER OF WOMEN IN ANIMATION Kara Frame, a 3D animation student and Shelly Fletcher, a graduate student, are rebuilding the chapter. They recently had an event with ILM's Victoria Livingstone as their guest presenter. They will keep ASIFA-SF informed of their future events. They can be reached at mudang@hotmail.com shellief@usa.net

THE CARTOON ART MUSEUM'S SPARKY AWARDS GALA TO HONOR ANIMATOR/PRODUCER BILL MELENDEZ, SAT. APRIL 8 The event named in honor of *Peanuts* creator Charles "Sparky" Schulz recognizes significant contributions to the art of cartooning by artists residing in the western United States. Schulz's wife, Jean, serves as honorary chair of the Sparky Awards. This year's award winners are: **Gary Larson**, creator of *The Far Side*; **Lou Grant**, editorial cartoonist; **Bill Melendez**, *Peanuts* animator and **John Severin**, war and western comic book artist. Special Sparky Awards will be presented to **Will Eisner**, creator of *The Spirit*, and to **Phil Frank**, creator of *Farley*, for their exceptional service to the cartoon art community.

Bill Melendez began his career in animation at the Disney studio in 1938. He worked as an animator on *Fantasia*, *Pinocchio*, *Bambi*, and *Dumbo*. After leaving Disney, he animated Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and Porky Pig for Leon Schlesinger Cartoons, which later became Warner Brothers Cartoons. Melendez worked for the UPA studio on its groundbreaking and highly stylized shorts including *Madeline* and *Gerald McBoing-Boing*. After a 10-year stint directing industrial films and television commercials, Mr. Melendez founded his own production company, Bill Melendez Productions, in 1964. That same year, he produced his first television special—*A Charlie Brown Christmas*. The show was an instant critical and popular success, winning both an Emmy and the prestigious George Foster Peabody Award for Outstanding Children/Young People's program. Mr. Melendez went on to produce more than 75 Charlie Brown specials and four feature-length movies as well as animating specials featuring Jim Davis's *Garfield*, *Babar the Elephant*, and Cathy Guisewite's *Cathy*. The eight Emmys and numerous other awards he has received attest to the significant contribution Melendez has made to the field of animation.

I interviewed Melendez for my book *Forbidden Animation* and he is a delightful, crusty old soul whose life hasn't been as simplistic as the above biography suggests. He went on strike at Disney and still has anger in his voice for those who crossed the picket lines. He quit UPA in disgust when they purged possible Communists from their staff. At an event at CAL Arts he got into a loud argument with Herb Klynn who remained at UPA. Klynn claimed that the loss of John Hubley, Phil Eastman, Bill Scott and other key people didn't make any difference to the studio's productions. Melendez said the decline in quality speaks for itself and most of the audience knew Melendez was right. I doubt he will be discussing controversial issues at the awards event, but if you ever get the chance to meet him he has a lot of information to share about what the industry was really like.

The gala begins with a reception at the Cartoon Art Museum (655 Mission Street) from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Guests will then enjoy dinner at the Palace Hotel (2 New Montgomery) along with a selection of wines from Kenwood Vineyards. The Fil Lorenz Trio will perform light jazz. The public is invited to attend this special evening and meet the guests of honor. Tickets are \$125 per person. Tables of eight are also available for \$950. For tickets and more information, call (415) 227-8666 ext. 300 or visit www.cartoonart.org.

CARTOON ART MUSEUM TO EXHIBIT "WEB-SLINGING AND WALL-CRAWLING: THE ART OF SPIDER-MAN" April 19-July, 21 Opening Reception April 19, 8:00 p.m. The show covers four decades of the strip, and features the work of dozens of artists and writers. In celebration of the 40th birthday of the Marvel character, the museum is presenting the first major exhibition of *Spider-Man* original art showcasing the works of talented individuals such as Steve Ditko, John Romita, Ross Andru, Todd McFarlane and a host of other artists past and present.

Spider-Man was created by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko in 1962 for Marvel Comics. It was a crucial figure in the silver age revival of the super-hero comic book. Spider-Man was a super-hero with super problems. He and his alter ego Peter Parker learn the hard way that with great power comes great responsibility. Comic book enthusiasts were thrilled to read about someone who had the same problems they did (school, dating, money, health, etc.), and a few that they didn't (maintaining a secret identity, fighting super-villains, saving the universe twice a month).

The success of the character led to comic book adventures, a newspaper comic strip, animated TV shows, a myriad of merchandising, and now a major motion picture to be released on May 3, 2002. With fans around the world and across several generations, Spider-Man has become an important icon of 20th century popular culture.

THE MUSEUM IS ALSO OPENING THE SECOND PART OF THEIR TRIBUTE TO EDWARD GOREY "GOREY GRAPHICS" is on display April 6 - July 28, 2002

BRAD DE GRAF IS ORGANIZING THE "INTERNET ANIMATION COLLECTION" A NON-PROFIT ONLINE LIBRARY He hopes it will become a permanent online library of animation. It is a project of the Internet Archive, a nonprofit that was founded to build an "Internet library" that will preserve work and giving permanent access to researchers, historians, and scholars.

There is a great deal of animation made around the world, but most of it is accessible only to a few people for a short time. Short films in particular have very transitory availability, being mostly viewable at festivals and traveling collections. Once seen, they often get shelved and are rarely, if ever, viewed again. Even those that do stay in circulation through video sales get limited exposure. Internet collections have been started, such as Atom Films and iFilm, but they have mutually exclusive rights, are for-profit, and are therefore limited in scope.

The Archive is in the process of establishing structures and processes for the sharing of intellectual property. These are thorny issues, with many "stakeholders" (e.g. creators, copyright owners, academicians, the production community, distributors, etc.). The Animation Collection will benefit greatly from the significant work the Archive has already done in regard to establishing standards that work for all. Initial use will focus around public-domain and easily obtained rights for non-exclusive, MPEG2 display for non-commercial use, co-evolving with the Archive's broader policies over time. Initial work is being funded by the Archive, which has also committed to matching grants from other sources to continue the work.

VINTON STUDIOS HIRES FORMER ILM COMMERCIAL HEAD JOHN RA BENSON Vinton Studios in Portland has hired John Ra Benson to manage the studios' computer animation department. He had been with ILM's commercial division for 5 years and before that with Colossal Pictures for 5 years.

CURIOUS PICTURES' FOUNDERS BUY BACK THE COMPANY At one time Curious had studios in San Francisco and New York. The company was sold to the Intel Film Corporation in May 1999 and the local office closed. The next year Intel created Dcode, a creative services agency. Both companies were sold to Curious' founders Susan Holden, Steve Oakes, David Starr and Richard Winkler for approximately \$5.1 million, including \$2,000,000 in cash. Curious Pictures produces commercials, television series and manufactures and sells toys under the name Curious Toys.

ELEGANT OFFICE SUITE AVAILABLE Production-office space, 1000 sq. feet, perfect for media production, management, etc. Beautiful space ready for occupancy, has phone system, independent ground electrical service, A/C, DSL, security system and client parking. Located in the heart of Emeryville half block from Pixar. Share elegant reception entry area with leading Bay Area audio facility as well as conference/lounge area. A must see. Check out sparkworld.com for visual reference before calling Todd at (510) 654-6544.

THIS ISSUE WAS WRITTEN BEFORE THE OSCARS WERE ANNOUNCED Congratulation to whomever won. Perhaps it should have been a tie between Pixar and PDI as both films were great. I also hope *Ice Age* is a hit and Blue Sky becomes an important creator of animated features. KC

LOCAL SCREENINGS

Friday, April 19, **BENEFIT PARTY FOR THE CARTOON ART MUSEUM** with live music by the Sprockets Ensemble, animation by Jason Shiga, Nina Paley, Chris Lanier and other artists, and more. A friend said last year's benefit had great food and drinks. Reasonable admission fee includes a lot of fun plus all you can eat and drink. (415) CAR-TOOON

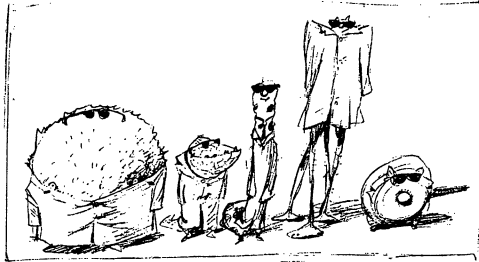
SEE FRONT PAGE FOR SF FILM FESTIVAL EVENTS

Sunday, April 21. ASIFA-SF presents **CAREERS IN ANIMATION**, with George Evelyn, director at Wild Brain; Bridget Erdmann, executive producer at Imaginengine Corp; Michel Lipman, freelance director and animator, and Victoria Livingstone, senior animator at ILM, 2:30 PM, S.F. State, Coppola Auditorium (Fine Arts 101)

Tuesday, April 23, **NIK PHELPS AND NINA PALEY**, "Music, Animation and Film" They will discuss how they work individually and together on projects (his music, her images). Reception at 7 (light refreshments), talk at 7:30, The Oakland Art Gallery, 150 Frank Ogawa Plaza 2, 14th and Broadway, Oakland, free, (510) 268-4978 www.artship.org

Monday, April 29, **IDEAS IN ANIMATION**, Nik Phelps and the Sprocket Ensemble, premieres of Nina Paley's *Naked Croquet* and Signe Baumann's *Five Fucking Fables* plus work by Chris Lanier, Marian Wallace, animators from Russia and Portugal, and more, at Minna Street Gallery. 111 Minna near 2nd St in SF. Shows at 7:30 and 9:30. This is their last Bay Area performance until late Fall. They will perform in Point Arena May 4 and then travel to the Annecy Animation Festival, to the Krok Festival and a silent film festival in Italy.

NATIONAL NEWS



BILL PLYMPTON'S 4th ANIMATED FEATURE, "MUTANT ALIENS," OPENS IN NYC ON APRIL 19 at the Cinema Village theater. Apollo Cinema is releasing the film around the U.S. following the N.Y. and L.A. screenings.

Mutant Aliens was in the Official Selection of the 2001 Sundance Film Festival and it won the Grand Prize at the 2001 Annecy Animation Festival. It tells the story of Earl Jensen, an astronaut who is stranded in space by Dr. Frubar, an evil space industry tycoon. Twenty years later, he returns to Earth with 5 adorable bloodthirsty aliens to get his revenge. "*Mutant Aliens* riffs on cliches of 50's sci-fi thrillers while trafficking in the usual Plympton-esque mix of jokey soft-core sex, straight-faced absurdity and comically exaggerated violence." Joe Leydon, *Variety*; "The funniest film of the year...one of the crown jewels of Sundance 2001" Rick Hamner, *Film Festival Reporter*.

For more information and images please visit Bill's websites at awn.com, plymptoons.com and mutantaliensmovie.com



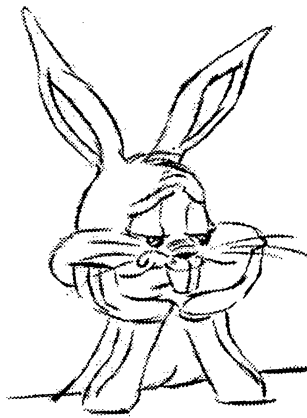
ASIFA-HOLLYWOOD HELD A SERIES OF FINE EVENTS IN MARCH

They included a Richard Williams book signing event similar to ours, a 16mm screening of rare animated educational and industrial films hosted by Jerry Beck, and Tom Sito interviewing Rudy Cataldi who worked for Disney in the 1940s and for

Hanna-Barbera in the 60's. They also had a party and screening honoring the publishing of *Animation Blast* #8

THE LITTLE THEATRE IN SEATTLE IS PRESENTING SEVERAL GREAT AND UNUSUAL ANIMATION PROGRAMS

In March they show *Stop-Motion: The First 50 Years*, including Starevitch, Willis O'Brien, Art Clokey and George Pal. For the Visual Music Festival 2002 they presented the *Kinetica 3* programs that were here last fall and a program on new shorts with Richard Reeves in-person. April 11-14 they will show the 5 animated shorts nominated this year for the Oscar.



ON THE PASSING OF CHUCK JONES A great deal has been said about the man and the wonderful work he directed. This issue could be filled with lots of memories, but due to space limitation I've chosen to run only a couple from Gary Meyer who presently runs the Balboa Theater.

"The first time I met him was at the Zagreb Animation Festival in 1972. There was a huge Yugoslavian style barbeque in a

park. International animators were sitting around drawing characters for fans. After watching people request Bugs and Daffy (he didn't create them but he helped develop their characters) and Roadrunner/Coyote, I approached Chuck. After talking a bit I asked if he could draw the frog from *One Froggy Evening*. His face lit up and he said, 'that is my favorite character of all I have worked on and nobody has ever asked me to draw him before.' The sketch holds a prized place in our home. In recent years Michigan J. Frog has become a superstar as the spokesfrog for the WB television network."

"Mostly he will be remembered by me for his being a part of the Telluride Film Festival. In the early years he was given a tribute, long before it became a popular thing to do. He loved his visit so much that he became a regular and designed three year's worth of posters following the theme he had explored in the first tribute when he showed a Chaplin, Keaton and Lloyd short and followed each one with one of his own cartoons. The posters depict Bugs as Charlie in the *Gold Rush*, Daffy as Harold hanging from a clock and RR as Buster in *The General*. They are a classic triptych."

"Chuck continued attending and contributing until the altitude was considered too high for his health. He tried to find a doctor, any doctor, who would say he could go to an elevation of nearly 7000 feet. None would agree. A few years ago the Chuck Jones Theatre opened complete with an Acme Box Office. It displays blowups of Chuck's sketches throughout the lobby and his interpretation of great art masterworks in the auditorium."

"I can not imagine the world will ever forget Chuck Jones. His work can be seen around the world 24 hours a day. When Warners starts to bring out DVDs of his work this fall it will be most welcomed, but I have no doubt for Chuck, sitting with a large audience of all ages as they giggle and laugh out loud will continue to be the tribute he would most appreciate. We hope to show some of his great works soon as shorts before features." Gary

I'd like to thank Gary for his comments and at the same time say I was slightly disappointment with the coverage in the mainstream press. Jones was given lots of space, but all I saw were obits that said he did this and that. They failed to capture his wonderful spirit and energy. He really loved the art of animation. He also did things like endowing an animation program at a college in Pennsylvania and providing scholarship money for students. He cared. KC

"N.Y. TIMES" GAVE A GEORGE MELIES DVD AN EXCEPTIONAL REVIEW The disc *Melies the Magician* from Facets Video contains 15 fully restored shorts dating from 1895 to work made before WWI. Also included is a documentary on this great film pioneer.

"METROPOLIS" WILL BE RELEASED ON VIDEO & DVD **APRIL 23** Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment delayed the DVD and VHS release of Osamu Tezuka's *Metropolis* because the film did better than expected in its theatrical run. It has earned over \$539,000 in theatres.

ASIFA-WASHINGTON (D.C.) PRESENTED 28 ANIMATED FILMS IN AN 8 DAY ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL It was held in March in 13 different locations. Many of the screenings were free.

THE ANIMATED MR. BEAN DEBUTS IN ENGLAND Rowan Atkinson has turned his character into an animated series being run on channel ITV1. "As a live-action character, Mr. Bean always possessed a cartoon-like quality," said Atkinson, who was filmed for every episode of the series so animators could use his movements as reference footage. Atkinson also provided voice-overs. His website has footage on the making of the production. mrbean.co.uk

REPORTS ARE BEING CIRCULATED THAT THERE ARE SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITHIN DISNEY The layoffs that began last summer have continued to hit hard at the Burbank studio's feature division, but not at Disney animation operations in Florida and Australia. This suggests they perceive a problem with their prestige features, not with their lower budget sequel features or their TV animation. People in development have been laid off (future projects) along with production staff members. Some of the people laid-off had been with the studio for over 20 years. One person was told he could continue to work for another 6 months if he wanted to go to Australia and train somebody there to do his old job. (He told them no, but in a less polite manner according to his friend.) One person speculated the studio is making short-sighted cuts to keep the value of their stock up. Another claimed this is a major reorganization, that they will go completely digital and that they are getting rid of fine draftsmen who don't use computers. Somebody presently working as a Disney artist said they are being trained to use Maya. Obviously they are shifting people over to 3D CGI. Tom Schumacher is reported to be talking about having an "ambidextrous studio" that can do both 2D and 3D, but it seems they are moving more towards 3D. Ironical, since they closed The Secret Lab, their CGI section, not so long ago."

Part of the problem is that sequels are made with relatively low production budgets compared with the costs of producing a major original feature. While it may be years before *Dinosaurs* and *Atlantis* break even (imdb.com reports *Atlantis* had a \$90 million budget and took in \$84 million in the US - and only part goes back to the producers), *The Tigger Movie* cost under \$20 million to make and grossed \$46 million domestic, about the same abroad and then it went to home video. *Variety* (reprinted by *Yahoo! News* on 2/19/02) says Disney spends about 2.5 years to make their sequels and the budgets range from \$8 to 15 million. *Return to Neverland* cost \$19.5 million to make. It grossed \$16.1 million the first 4 days it was in release and after 3 weeks it had grossed \$41.5 million. Some Disney sequels, that have gone directly to home video, have grossed about \$150 million each (*Lady and the Tramp II*, *Little Mermaid II*, *Scamp's Adventure*, etc.).

Another sign that there is trouble comes from an administrator at CAL Arts. Disney usually sends recruiters to the school looking for new talent that they might hire. Disney's special recruiting day is not scheduled to happen this year.

Meanwhile an ASIFA-SF member just back from Disneyland writes, "I'm happy to report that the magic is still there even though a lot of the park is chipping and peeling. It was magical and a tiny bit tragic at the same time. It really is run-down. It made me long for my lost innocent youth, before I knew about budgets, upkeep costs etc."

ON MARCH 19 CBS REPORTED "DISNEY SAYS IT WILL LAY OFF ANIMATORS" After writing the above article I read that Disney plans to lay off another 250 animators by May 2003. They will reduce their staff "as part of an ongoing change in the animation industry, which still is trying to shake off the bloat of a massive buildup in the mid-1990s, spokeswoman Andrea Marozas said. Disney cut 500 animation jobs last year and reduced salaries by as much as half."

Disney "may continue to bring the artists back in on various projects... Animators enjoyed a period in the 1990s when demand was at a premium for their services. After Disney scored a giant hit with 1994's "The Lion King," a number of competitors jumped into the animation game only to retreat after public interest in the films fizzled."

"Disney officials said in news reports that they plan to stick with traditional hand-drawn animation despite the recent success of such computer-generated films." *Russ Britt, Los Angeles, CBS.MarketWatch.com.*

A former Disney artist told us, "The Disney Feature Animation staff had grown to about 1500 in 2001 from 120 in 1975. It's a terrible time for them all. As bad as 1958 after *Sleeping Beauty* when the staff went from 500 to 75."

WALT DISNEY SELECTS RICHARD COOK TO BE THEIR CHAIRMAN Richard W. Cook has become chairman of The Walt Disney Studios and will head production for Disney, Touchstone and Hollywood Pictures. In addition, he will be responsible for worldwide distribution and marketing for live-action and feature animated films, worldwide home entertainment operations and the studio's legal and business affairs. He will report to both Disney chairman and CEO Michael D. Eisner, and Disney president and COO Robert A. Iger.

Cook has been with Disney for 31 years. He served for six years as a chairman overseeing domestic and international theatrical marketing and distribution, feature film acquisition, and worldwide home video. He began his career with the company in 1970 as a ride operator at Disneyland. In 1971 he became a Disneyland sales representative and was eventually promoted to manager of sales for the park. He advanced to manager of the company's pay television and non-theatrical releases in 1977 and was involved with early plans for The Disney Channel. In 1980 he became assistant domestic sales manager for Buena Vista and subsequently became vice president and general sales manager, and then in 1988 senior vice president of Buena Vista Pictures Distribution.

DAVID STANTON PROMOTED TO PRESIDENT OF WALT DISNEY TELEVISION ANIMATION He had been executive vice president of the division. Stanton's responsibilities include overseeing the operation of the division's animated television series and specials, Disney video premieres and features that are sequels. He will continue to report to Thomas Schumacher, head of Walt Disney Television Animation and Walt Disney Feature Animation.

Stanton began his career at Disney in 1989 as a manager of special projects for Walt Disney Pictures and Television. In 1991 he joined the feature division. As vice president of creative affairs, he built up the development department. In January 1998, he was named senior vice president of creative affairs for Feature Animation and was put in charge of their animation studio in Paris. He returned to Burbank in January 2000, to head up TV Animation as executive vice president.

TOM SITO HAS WRITTEN THE ONLY ARTICLE I'VE SEEN ON THE CURRENT "HARD TIMES IN TOON TOWN"

The December, *Millimeter* gave him almost a page on the problem producers of animated features are having along with the producers of 2D TV commercials. He reports the union's membership has lost about 1000 jobs since 1998 when there was 90% employment in the industry. Many have taken lower paying non-union jobs to survive. Some of the jobs are with new non-union studios in Texas, Chicago, and abroad, where the pay and benefits are less.

He also wrote about the good news. He points out the success of *Shrek* and two long running TV series (*Simpsons* and *Family Guy*). He also mentions how there has been a big increase in the number of animated features being made and how the Academy has just recognized animated features as an Oscar category for the first time.

SCREEN DAILY.COM REPORTS DISNEY IS GETTING THE RIGHTS FOR "SPIRITED AWAY" for distribution in North America. The film is Hayao Miyazaki's smash animated hit that broke all box office records in Japan. Disney obtained the rights to the film for Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and France in previously concluded deals.

Meanwhile, sales agent Wild Bunch is handling other world rights to the film, excluding South Korea, and has recently concluded distribution deals for the UK, Switzerland, Italy and Russia.

Hopefully Disney has learned a lot from Miramax's much-criticized handling of the North American release of Miyazaki's *Princess Mononoke*. For many months Disney said they were not interested in distributing this feature, but now they are said to be moving quickly to get *Spirited Away* released, possibly as early as July. The studio has already engaged Pixar creative chief John Lasseter to serve as creative consultant on the dubbed version of *Spirited Away*. No voice casting choices have been announced.

Spirited Away has been in release in Japan for seven months and it is still being shown in over 100 theaters. It is closing in on the Y30 billion (\$226m) and 23 million admissions marks. The film won the Golden Bear award at the Berlin Film Festival.

Princess Mononoke, 1997 by Miyazaki, was the previous Japanese box office record-holder at \$150 million US. Unfortunately Disney didn't market it very well. It only earned \$2.37 million in the US (it opened in October 1999 on 131 screens in 69 U.S. and Canadian cities). After that disappointing showing Disney appeared to loose interest in doing further business with Miyazaki's work.

Spirited Away is a modern fantasy about a ten-year-old girl who finds herself in a mysterious world of goblins and gods. Though filmed in 2D animation, it makes the most extensive use of digital technology of any film in Studio Ghibli's seventeen-year history.

COMPANY MAKING LARGE FORMAT PRINTS GETS AN ACADEMY TECHNICAL AWARD FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO 70MM FILMS - THEIR PR GIVES INSIGHT INTO THE PROFIT POTENTIAL OF 70MM THEATERS Imagica Corporation of L.A. and Tokyo got a technical Oscar for their part in making 70mm IMAX and prints for other 70mm projectors possible. Christopher Reyna, president of Imagica USA says, "Theaters with 8/70 systems had an especially hard time getting launched, because they couldn't get films. The only quality format conversion services were at Imagica in Tokyo. It was hard for the industry to move ahead. Bringing the optical wetgate printer to Los Angeles changed all that. Today, most major large format films are released in 8/70 and 10/70 as well as 15/70... This award-winning optical wetgate printer is the one Disney chose to create both the 8/70 and the 15/70-dome conversions of *Beauty and the Beast*, which opened in 100 large format theaters around the world Jan. 1. That's a fundamental change from what Disney did with the large format release of *Fantasia 2000*, two years earlier. *Fantasia* was released in 15/70 only (for IMAX projectors). It showed in 75

theaters. Since then, 8/70 format has become more popular, especially with commercial exhibitors. Producers and distributors realize they're leaving money on the table if they don't cross-platform their films. Considering that the number of large format theaters worldwide is about 300, an increase of 25 theaters is extremely significant."

Fantasia 2000 grossed about \$800,000 per screen. *Beauty and the Beast* grossed \$7.7 million in it's first 13 days on 68 screens and \$20.2 million by mid-March. It is showing in IMAX and Iwerks theaters. Iwerks shows 8/70 prints. In comparison *Cyberworld 3D* (2000), a popular compilation of cgi shorts by PDI and other companies that was put together for IMAX, has grossed \$10.6million.

ANIMATED FEATURES BEING RELEASED LATER THIS YEAR COVER A LOT OF GROUND At one end of the spectrum is *The Incredible Mr. Limpet*, directed by Mike Judge for Warner Bros. Judge created *Beavis and Butt-Head*.

At the other end of the spectrum is *Jonah, a VeggieTale Movie* by Big Ideas Productions of Chicago. The film will promote Judeo-Christian values. No specific date or distributor has been announced. The directors are Mike Nawrocki and Phil Vischer. Since 1993, the company has sold 25 million copies of their direct to video *VeggieTale* videotapes. See bigideafun.com The art isn't very interesting looking to me, but young kids must like it.

Other upcoming releases for 2002 include *The Tortoise and the Hare*, directed by Richard Golezowski of Aardman Animations (Nick Parks works for them), *Lilo and Stitch* from Disney (June release), *Treasure Planet* from Disney (November, a joint IMAX and 35mm release) and *Tusker* by Brad Lewis and Tim Johnson of PDI (December).

OPTIMISM TO THE END A writer in the *Hollywood Reporter* wrote in December, "Square Pictures invested four years and more than \$135 million to create the groundbreaking realistic CGI feature *Final Fantasy: The Spirit Within*, which grossed a disappointing \$32.1 million at the North American box office. But the studio isn't deterred." In February AWN.COM reported the studio is about to close.

ALIAS/WAVEFRONT IS MAKING THEIR MAYA PERSONAL LEARNING EDITION, A NON-COMMERCIAL VERSION OF THEIR 3D SOFTWARE, AVAILABLE FOR FREE They are giving users of Windows and Mac OS X free access to their non-commercial version of their award-winning Maya software. This could be important news for 3D graphic artists, animators, students, and other wanting to learn how to use their state-of-the art products.

SOFTIMAGE, A DIVISION OF AVID, WILL MAKE THEIR LATEST 3D SOFTWARE AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS They are giving non-commercial users their top-of-the-line XSI v.2.0 Advanced 3D animation system at no cost. The *SoftimageXSI Experience* is a two-CD pack, complete with a searchable documentation library and a comprehensive video-based training module. The software gives unlimited access to their nonlinear animation system as well as to the tools needed to learn it.

A COMMENT ABOUT OR CHANGING WORLD by a member who lives out-of-state. "I didn't see much animation at the Ann Arbor Film Festival this year. It made me wonder if less animators are going to 16mm film as the finishing step." Editor: We don't see much 16mm at our open screenings for students and independents - most use video.

HAVE YOU VISITED OUR WEB SITE? ASIFA-SF.ORG

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**GEORGE EVELYN, DIRECTOR,
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**BRIDGET ERDMANN, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER,
IMAGINENGINE CORP.**

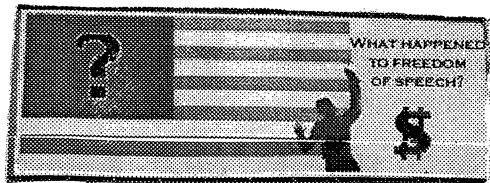
**MICHAEL LIPMAN, FREELANCE ANIMATION DIRECTOR
AND ANIMATOR**

**A REPRESENTATIVE FROM
INDUSTRIAL LIGHT + MAGIC**

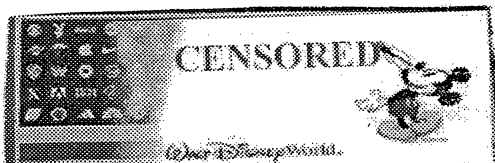
SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2:30 PM

**At San Francisco State, August Coppola Auditorium (Fine Arts 101,
between Creative Arts and the Student Union), free, public invited**

Careers in Animation is an event designed for people who want to know how to find employment in the local animation industry. Representatives from the industry will discuss the kinds of work they do, how to contact companies, who gets hired, what training you need to get a job, how to impress people who are in a position to hire you (portfolio tips) and other basics. This is your chance to get all your questions answered about careers in animation.

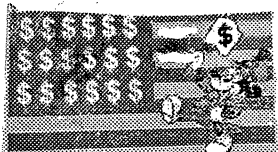
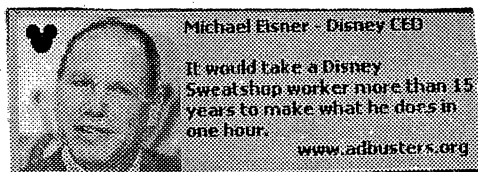


NEW YORK CITY BILLBOARD VS DISNEY IS AN ILLUSTRATED STORY AT AD.BUSTERS.ORG ABOUT A BIG CORPORATION OBJECTING TO AN ANTI-CORPORATE BILLBOARD NEAR TIMES SQUARE It seems Miramax, a Disney owned division, was making a movie and sent Adbusters a letter asking them to either take down their offensive billboard for a couple of weeks, cover it up, or change the artwork while they were filming in the new wholesome Times Square area. Adbuster's sign has corporate symbols replacing the stars on the American flag and reads "Declare Independence From Corporate Rule." Adbusters objects to the "Disnification" of the area and ignored the request. Instead they ask artists to design new billboards for them. Their article says, "we are prepared to offer a compromise. We will Disney-fy the flag." The following are mock-up illustrations of some of their new flag designs and other entries. The site also invites people to send in their suggestions.



the Adbuster sign that Miramax objected to & artist alterations

ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO
P.O. Box 14516
San Francisco, CA 94114



This issue was written by Karl Cohen using information from AWN.COM, CBS, Cartoon Research.Com, Screen Daily.Com, Hollywood Reporter, Millimeter, Adbusters.Com, other published sources and from information provided by members, companies and friends. Pete Davis proofread it and the mailing crew included Nancy Phelps, Laura Tulloss and Shirley Smith. Membership is \$22 a year from above address.

JOBS

PRODUCER SOUGHT for local stop-motion TV series in development. Must have attention to detail, good knowledge of TV industry, excellent negotiating skills and a track record in organizing business and finance plans and coordinating productions. Please email resume, industry credits, and cover letter detailing why you are right for this job, to Don Thomas: deebo@sfsu.edu Do not send attachments. We are an equal opportunity employer.

FESTIVALS

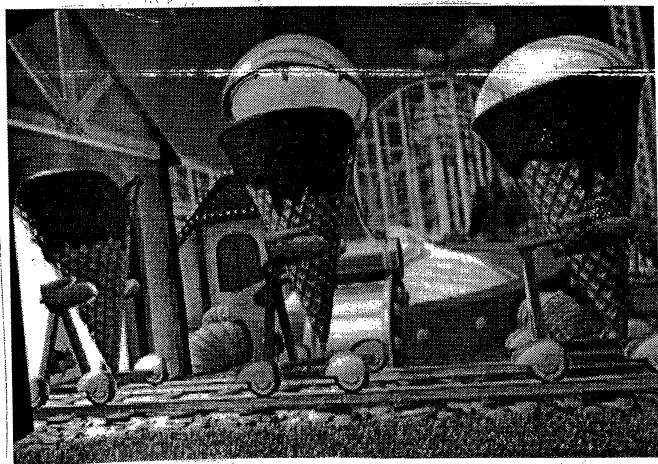
THE KROK INTERNATIONAL ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL sails from St. Petersburg to Moscow, Wednesday, August 14 - Friday, August 23, 2002 Entry Deadline is Wednesday, May 15, 2002 "Krok" takes place each year on a cruise ship. They show films in competition, features and retrospectives on the cruise. For information contact: Irina Kaplichnaya, Phone: 38 (044) 227 52 80; Fax: 38 (044) 227 31 30; or email krok2001@ukr.net

CRESTED BUTTE REEL FEST, MAY 10 DEADLINE FOR STUDENT FILMS (DEADLINE FOR REGULAR ENTRIES HAS PAST) \$30 entry fee for students. 12 cash prizes in student categories (\$200 and \$100). In a great location. Event is Aug. 14 - 18. If you go look up Laura Cooper Elm, an ASIFA-SF member who loves Colorado, but misses talking with other animators. For information and form P.O. Box 1733, 214 6th St., Crested Butte, CO 81224, (970) 349-2600 or crestedbuttereelfest.com

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, DEADLINE IS MAY 1 for a late October event. \$35 entry fee for shorts, preview work on 1/2" tape, they give a decent number of awards selected by an adult jury, and a similar number chosen by a children's jury. This is now the largest festival of films intended for kids in North America. For information and forms (773) 281-9075, www.cicff.org, or write 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60614



6/30/2002 Local
John Peterson
12 Bishop Lane
Menlo Park, CA 94025



WILD BRAIN PRODUCES TWO SWEET ADS FOR DREYER'S ICE CREAM that promote a new line of "irresistible" flavors. The 30 second "Coney Island Waffle Cone" and "Avalanche" ads were directed by Wild Brain co-founder and Senior Creative Director John Hays. The colorful spots were created using a seamless blend of traditional illustration, 3D CG animation and live action. They used proprietary and off-the-shelf digital tools including Adobe Photoshop, Alias/Wavefront's Maya, Adobe After Effects and Commotion, Shake and Flame.

The Coney Island ad was inspired by an original drawing by Mark Hess. It shows an amusement park that looks like waffle cones. "The Black Raspberry Avalanche" ad was designed from an original illustration by Robert Goldstrom. A beautiful, snow-covered mountain range becomes swirls of ice cream surrounded by clusters of black raspberries and chocolate chunks. A snowflake lightly touches a raspberry, causing the berries to tumble down the mountainside, causing an avalanche of ice cream, raspberries and chocolate chunks.

The ads combine illustrations with 3D CG animation and live action. They used Alias/Wavefont's Maya, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe After Effects, Commotion, Shake and Flame. John Hays directed, Holly Edwards was the producer and Jeff Fino was the executive producer. John Korellis was the illustrator and the senior technical directors were Ben Fischler (Coney Island) and Nick Weigel (Avalanche). Other talent working on the ads included Dado Feigenblatt, Kristen Borges, Ed Davis, Seryong Kim, Brad Rau, Jeff Vacanti, Kristen Borges, Scott Adams, Kevin Bell, Eric Schweikert and Sasha Houdek.

PIXAR-DISNEY ANNOUNCE THE TITLES OF THEIR FINAL 3 FILMS IN THEIR AMAZINGLY SUCCESSFUL 5 PICTURE DEAL They are *Finding Nemo*, an underwater adventure directed by Andrew Stanton (co-director on *A Bug's Life*); *The Incredibles*, a super-hero comedy directed by Brad Bird (director of *Iron Giant*) and *Cars*, a Route 66 adventure directed by John Lasseter. *Nemo* is set for a Summer, 2003 release.



WILD BRAIN HAS PRODUCED "THE WALL STREET JOURNAL'S" FIRST ANIMATED COMMERCIAL "Stipple Guy" promotes their new "Personal Journal" section. The live-action/animated spot

uses stippled graphics, a style that has long been associated with the publication. Faced with the challenge of animating a complex illustration, Wild Brain developed a method that combined rotoscoped live action, original stippled illustrations, 2D animation, and After Effects warping and compositing to create the ad's look.

The ad was made in 3 lengths: 60 second, 30 and 15. It was directed by Gordon Clark, produced by Amy Capen, and the executive producer was Jeff Fino. Achiu So was the animation director and the animators were Billy Burger, Brian Fee, Dick Hill, Sam Hood, Cindy Ng and Aaron Sorenson. The assistant animators were Ken Kaiser and Jeff Nevins, the technical director was Nathan Stephens and the technical supervisor was Eric Schweikert. The After Effects animators were Jance Allen, Chris Green, and Kevin Bell. The After Effects compositors were Ty Bardi, Dennis Wilkins, and Nathan Stephens. Danya O'Brien and Kenrick Walz did digital ink and paint, Gooby Herms, Scott Adams and Kevin Bell provided Photoshop images and Sara Achilli and Cynthia Crimmins were production assistants on this job.

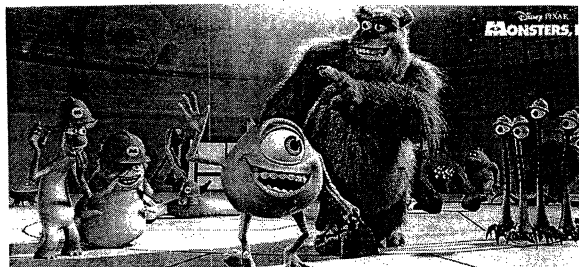


CHECK OUT KEVIN COFFEY'S AMAZING NEW WEB SITE FOR CARTOONLAND Kevin Coffey has unleashed his *Cartoonland* web site on an unsuspecting world. He has spent months (1000's

(thousands of hours) working on it as he believes "if you are going to survive as an independent you better have your marketing plan together." www.cartoonlandanimation.com

Coffey's site consists of a splash page, home page and 9 pages of relevant information. There are more than a dozen film clips, including examples of his feature, commercial and industrial work plus rare out-takes from Coffey's cable access television program *Cartoonland Presents*. It is on Cable Channel 29 in San Francisco on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month.

NEW COMPANY IN ALAMEDA IS PRODUCING EFFECTS ANIMATION FOR "THE MARTIX 2" Tom Gibbons, who created *The Hunger Artist* is working there as animation supervisor. The company is Escape (aka ESC).



"MONSTERS, INC. " PASSES "SHREK" TO BECOME THE SECOND HIGHEST GROSSING ANIMATED FILM EVER Disney/Pixar's *Monsters* has earned an estimated \$504 million to date (\$253 million in domestic box office receipts and \$251.2 million in international box office receipts). *The Lion King* is the world's animated box office champ, having grossed about \$766.9 million worldwide.

PIXAR OFFERS MORE BELLS AND WHISTLES WITH THE LATEST RENDERMAN SOFTWARE RenderMan Release 11 now offers "support for ray tracing, global illumination and deep shadows. These new features, combined with significant performance gains, represent a major enhancement to the 3D rendering system. RenderMan Release 11 employs an innovative hybrid rendering architecture that delivers global illumination and ray tracing effects under precise control of the artist as a natural part of the REYES architecture, meaning special effects such as reflections, refractions and color bleeding will be produced with greater accuracy. Also, because the renderer itself can calculate effects that previously required manual intervention, the artist's setup time for a shot can be dramatically reduced. The performance gains in Release 11 are the direct result of testing and analysis in Pixar's own intensive feature film production pipeline. Sophisticated improvements to hair and fur rendering, as well as shadows generation and the ability to handle dense scenes with high depth complexity, have led to dramatic performance gains."

"Pixar's RenderMan Release 11 will enter beta testing in June 2002 and will be released in the fourth quarter of 2002. For more information on RenderMan, including product descriptions and price lists, pixar.com/renderman

MAYA FOR LESS Alias/Wavefront has drastically reduced the list prices of its Maya Complete and Maya Unlimited 3D animation software packages. Maya Complete, formerly priced at \$7,500, will sell for \$1,999 and Maya Unlimited, which formerly sold for \$16,000, will be priced at \$6,999. aliaswavefront.com

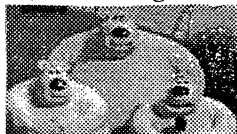
THE ANNUAL ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL TOUR WILL BE AT FOOTHILL COLLEGE AND EXCERPTS WILL BE ON KQED-TV IN MAY The Ann Arbor Tour is a show of highlights from this year's festival of independently made films. Usually there are a lot of animated works included. On Saturday and Sunday, May 11 and 12 at 7pm, the programs will be shown at Foothill College in Appreciation Hall, 12324 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills, CA (330).672-4914.

On Friday, May 17 at 11pm, KQED-TV will broadcast a selection of films from the festival on Channel 9. For details visit kqed.org

SPIKE AND MIKE OPENED THEIR 20TH EDITION OF THEIR CLASSIC FESTIVAL OF ANIMATION HERE WITH ALMOST NO PUBLICITY, BUT IT IS A GREAT SHOW - TRY TO SEE IT It has already played several

locations in our area. You can see it in May at the Grand Lake Theater in Oakland, May 10 - 16; the Crest in Sacramento, May 15 - 19 and at the Towne in San Jose, May 17 - May 31.

For the past 25 years Spike and Mike have been showcasing animation. This year Mike has put together an exceptional show of hits from the past. Some of the films in this year's festival are *Bunny* (1998 Oscar Winner), *Creature Comforts* (1990 Oscar Winner), *Balance* (1989 Oscar Winner), *Tin Toy* (1988 Oscar Winner), *For the Birds* (2002 Oscar Winner), *The Janitor* (1994 Oscar Nominee), *Grasshoppers* (1990 Oscar Nominee), plus *The Devil Went Down to Georgia*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Your Face*, *The Prince*



Creature Comforts

and the Princess, *Mons the Cat*, and *Bambi Meets Godzilla*. For more details spikeandmike.com, but it may not be in operation.

This is a great show, but it opened at the end of March with very little publicity. There were a few radio ads and flyers were put up on poles a few days after the show opened. *The Chronicle* had a nice article in it, but I never saw a newspaper ad and it took me 3 weeks to find a place that had their printed color programs.

Friends tell me they didn't see Spike at international festivals last year and he told *The Chronicle*, "I see some truly terrible stuff. It's like going through tons of sand to get some gold." I hope he isn't burnt out or no longer cares about seeking out the best. I wish him well and hope he continues presenting great new animation from around the world. KC

NINA PALEY TO DRAW A COMIC STRIP FOR KING FEATURES She has signed a contract with King Features Syndicate to illustrate a daily comic strip called "The Hots," written by Stephen Hersh. He did a strip for Universal Press called "Bliss", that she "liked a lot. Our new strip should launch in September, I'll keep you posted."

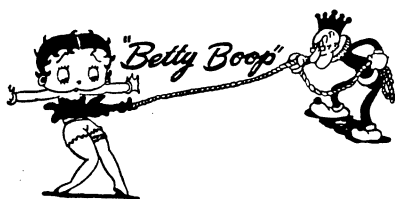
Nina continues work on her documentary *Thank You For Not Breeding* and leaves in May for India where she will visit Dan McHale. He is working/teaching at Toonz India until September.

COMPANY HYPE IS SOMETIMES JUST THAT The new commercial division of Film Roman recently announced they have added five new directors to their "growing roster of talent." They are Aaron Augenblick, Joe Russo, Divya Srinivasan, Jeff Drew and Nina Paley. When I contacted Nina to congratulate her, she said that while she is honored by their representing her on their latest reel, it doesn't mean she will get any work from them (I hope she does). KC

THE TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL WILL PREMIERE ILM'S "STAR WARS: EPISODE II, ATTACK OF THE CLONES" The New York screening will benefit The Children's Aid Society. The event will happen on May 12. The feature's national release begins on May 16.



Tightrope



NATIONAL NEWS

THE GUARDIAN IN ENGLAND PUBLISHED ARTICLE ON ANIMATION CENSORSHIP BY KARL COHEN in connection with the screening of his film program *Forbidden Animation* at the Bristol Animation Festival. The article (4/26/02), my first in a major daily can be found at guardian.co.uk and search for Forbidden Animation or Blind Drawing (their title for the article). Or try [film/guardian.co.uk/features/feature pages/0,,691193,00](http://film/guardian.co.uk/features/feature%20pages/0,,691193,00)

MONDO MEDIA PRESENTS DANGEROUS ENEMY PROPAGANDA They are presently showing an Al Qaeda Recruiting Video that was written by Don Asmussen. The animation direction on this web cartoon was by Lippy and features animation by Kenn Navarro and Lippy. As this was going to press he had just finished a new short called "The IsRAEL World" (takeoff on MTV's "Real World") where Arafat and Sharon have to live in a house together. It should be up on Mondo's web site by the time you read this.

PORTLAND'S HOLLYWOOD THEATRE SHOWED ANIMATION BY VICTORIA LIVINGSTONE AND CHRIS LANIER The hour program organized by Media Monkey included *Window* by Livingstone (she represented ILM at our April event on careers) and *Scarfmania* by Lanier.

ANOTHER AWARD FOR "SHREK" At the 49th Motion Picture Sound Editors Golden Reel Awards banquet, Century City, California in March, they awarded *Shrek* Best Sound Editing -- Music, Animated Feature.

BILL BREITHAUP'T'S "ARE YOU LOST?" is a 5min "B-man video for the Alice 3min. film festival." It is showing on upwardrising.com

KEN KEARNEY'S TV SHOW WINS AN AWARD He recently won a Western Access Video Excellence Award. He creates a cable TV show in the Santa Cruz area and several half-hour segments have been interviews with animators who worked for Disney, MGM and other studios. He also worked on the video *Welcome Back Del Mar Theatre!* about the reopening of this Santa Cruz movie palace. He has been a member of our chapter for years and has contributed drawings and political cartoons that have been run in our newsletter.

THERE WERE LOTS OF COMPANIES INTERESTED IN HIRING ANIMATORS AT THE GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE IN SAN JOSE Tony Reveaux, a journalist for *Film/Tape World*, said there were about 40 companies that had recruiting tables. They ranged from LucasArts to the State of Maryland.

RE-CONNECT: SILICON VALLEY BUSINESS EXPO will be June 26 at the San Jose McEnery Convention Center, for details (408) 291-5263, sjchamber.com

N.Y. TIMES GIVES BILL PLYMPTON'S "MUTANT ALIENS" A MIXED REVIEW *The NY Times* isn't always kind to animation. They trashed *Ice Age* so Plympton got off easier than Chris Wedge. On 4/19/02 David Kehr called him, "unquestionably a brilliant draftsman, and within the severe limitations of his small budgets (most of his films have been self-financed) he is a capable, often inventive animator..."

"The nose people — big noses with little feet sticking out of their nostrils — are a fine example of what animation can still offer over even digitally enhanced live action films: it can bring the utterly preposterous to life. *Mutant Aliens* is full of similarly inventive creations, but Mr. Plympton fails to develop compelling personalities for any of his characters."



"Instead, he takes refuge in extended soft-core sex scenes and action sequences grounded in grisly violence: ingredients that might be necessary to establish the 'adult' credentials of this definitely-not-for-children cartoon but that also interrupt its development and skewer its narrative line."

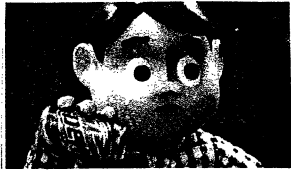
I gather the writer doesn't care too much for outrageous sex and humorous violence. KC

"ICE AGE" CONTINUES TO MAKE MONEY, BUT "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST" SEEMS TO HAVE RUN OUT OF STEAM *Ice Age* has grossed about \$160 million. *Beauty* is stalled around \$24 million which is a lot less than *Fantasia 2000* made after 15 weeks at IMAX theatres. *Monsters* has grossed about \$253 million, *Harry Potter* has taken in \$317.2 million and *Lord of the Rings* \$307 million.

THE NEXT FEATURE FROM BLUE SKY IS TITLED "ROBOTS" After *Ice Age* grossed over \$100 million in three weeks, Fox Animation/Blue Sky Studio decided to announce they are developing *Robots*, based on a children's book by William Joyce, as their next project. *Variety* reports Blue Sky has completed preliminary storyboards and most of the visual design of the feature. A person I met in NYC who worked on *Ice Age* said there is no news yet on when the studio will begin animating the feature.

ASIFA.NET, THE INTERNATIONAL SITE, IS GROWING New articles on the site include *Zagreb Animation Festival: Interview with Margit "Buba" Antauer*; *Zagreb 2002 Selection: Report* by David Ehrlich *Leipzig 2001 Animation Festival: Film Reviews* by Stanislav Ulver and *ASIFA Slovenia: 50 Years Animation Retrospective*. There is also news from chapters in Bulgaria, Croatia, US Central, ASIFA Hollywood, ASIFA East, ASIFA San Francisco, ASIFA Colorado and ASIFA Washington.

Some useful addresses: asifa.net/washington, asifa-hollywood.org, asifa-sf.org, afca.asso.fr (ASIFA France) and asifa.net/israel ASIFA.NET'S web master has created a new address for Karl Cohen. He can now be reached at either karlcohen@earthlink.net or president@asifa-sf.org. There is also an ASIFA e-mail discussion group. Check the site for details. ASIFA.NET is getting around 5000 visits per month.



**WRECKLESS ABANDON
MIXED NEW FOOTAGE
WITH OLD IMAGES FROM
THE "DAVY AND GOLIATH"
SHOW TO CREATE A
MOUNTAIN DEW AD**

Ruth Clokey produced the Sunday morning TV series for the Lutheran Church (began in 1962). It has serious moral messages/lessons in each episode. Now, with permission of the Church, Davy is back drinking Mountain Dew. Art Clokey (Gumby's father) was a director on the series.

**ASIFA-JAPAN SEEKS ART FROM OTHER
CHAPTERS TO DISPLAY AT HIROSHIMA 2002**

They are celebrating their 20th Anniversary during the forthcoming festival August 22nd - 26th, 2002, and are asking all ASIFA National Groups "to kindly send us a drawing for the special exhibition during the festival... In order to present the strength and unification of ASIFA, we should be most pleased if your Group could make us a drawing to express your feelings to ASIFA-Japan... The drawing could be made by one of your members or made together by several/all of your members. It could be either black & white or colour, using any kind of artistic expressions, the size should be between 297mm x 420mm (minimum) to 728mm x 1028mm (maximum), and we would like to receive your artwork in Hiroshima by the end of June." If anyone wants to organize a group effort or contribute a drawing "to express your feelings to ASIFA-Japan," on behalf of our chapter, please contact Karl Cohen (415) 386-1004 karlcohen@earthlink.net

**YALE RESEARCH STUDY TELLS US WHAT WE
HAVE TO DO TO LOOK LIKE KEN OR BARBIE**

The Yale University Center for Eating and Weight Disorders reports in the *International Journal of Eating Disorders* that the average woman who wants to look like Barbie has to grow 2 feet taller, gain 5 inches in the chest, lose 6 inches in the waist, and lengthen her neck by slightly more than 3 inches. The average man who wants to look like Ken has to grow 20 inches taller and increase his chest by 11 inches and his neck circumference by about 8 inches. Was this a federally funded project?

Meanwhile up in Vancouver, Mainframe is gearing up to do an exciting project, the second direct-to-video Barbie feature. It comes as no surprise that the first direct-to-video Barbie feature, *Barbie in the Nutcracker*, was a success at the cash register. It may not have been reviewed by the *NY Times*, but I'm sure it was an artistic triumph.

**THE NATIONAL NETWORK (TNN) TO PRESENT AN
ADULT PRIMETIME ANIMATION BLOCK IN 2003**

They will feature *Gary the Rat*, a new series with the voice of Kelsey Grammer as Gary, an unscrupulous and immoral New York attorney who wakes up one morning to discover he's turned into a rat. They will rerun *The Ren and Stimpy Show*, and are producing at least 3 other shows. *Joe Duffy* a comedy featuring a "modern-day Archie Bunker," *Stripperella*, is by Spider-man's creator Stan Lee (Pamela Anderson is the voice of a stripper/super-heroine), and Klasky Csupo is developing *The Immigrants*. TNN is owned by MTV.

**THE "LOS ANGELES TIMES" HAS REPORTED
MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE DISNEY LAYOFFS**

They place the layoffs in the coming year as "up to 265 employees" at their Burbank facility and they say approximately 200 animation employees were laid off last year. They also closed Secret Lab, a computer animation and visual-effects division, losing another 300 employees. Many people who were kept on at the Burbank studio took salary cuts of 30% to 50%. As part of Disney's shift from traditional animation to CG, they have established a million dollar budget to retrain traditional artists to use computers.

Disney will release two traditionally animated films this year. *Lilo and Stitch*, produced at their Florida studio, comes out June 21, and *Treasure Planet*, animated in Burbank, will be released November 27. Disney is doing their low budget features (mainly sequels) at their television animation studio in Australia. They made *Return to Neverland* (a Peter Pan sequel) and are finishing *Jungle Book 2*, which comes out next February.

**"VILLAGE VOICE" CLAIMS DISNEY PRESSURED
"THE NEW YORK POST" TO FIRE AN
ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER CRITICAL OF THEM**

Nikki Finke had written two stories about "a company that owns merchandising rights to Winnie the Pooh and claims it has been cheated out of millions in royalty payments" (by Disney). The second article disclosed Disney was fined "\$90,000 last year for destroying documents that may or may not have been relevant to the case." Disney claims part of Finke's reporting is "recklessly inaccurate." *The Village Voice* thinks Disney's CEO may have "personally raged on Murdoch," the *Post's* owner. For details see *Village Voice*, March 20-26, "When Disney Complains, Sack the Reporter. Who's Afraid of Mickey Mouse" by Cynthia Cotts.

**VICKY JENSON, CO-DIRECTOR OF "SHREK," TO
DIRECT "SHARKSLAYER" AT DREAMWORK'S
NEW LA CGI DIVISION**

She will direct with Eric Bergeron who was on *The Road to El Dorado*. *Sharkslayer*, is "an undersea mob comedy." Will Smith is the voice of "a young fish that is found at the scene of the crime when the son of the 'godfather' of all sharks gets killed." A 2004 release is planned.

**STRANGE NEWS: VINTON STUDIOS AND OTHERS
CONNECTED WITH THE "PJ'S" ARE BEING SUED**

by a Chicago janitor who claims his likeness was used in the design of a janitor on the show (voiced by Eddie Murphy, so he is being sued too). *Variety* says Tally Collier claims Fox, Vinton, Murphy and others based the character of the show's building superintendent on his appearance in a documentary about janitors. Collier thinks all Hollywood saw the documentary after it was sent to the Oprah Winfrey Show.

**CINAR IN CANADA GETS A CONTRACT TO
PRODUCE 16 EPISODES OF "CAILLOU"**

Cinar was hit 2 or 3 years ago by a series of scandals. They have been settled. *Caillou* is a preschool series based on a popular children's book. Forty episodes already exist. The new ones start to air next January.

ANIMATION IN INDIA Bill Dennis, president of Toonz India, writes "ASIFA-India is moving right along. We're now at 50+ members from eight animation studios as well as a few independents. We're preparing for our first workshop. It will be conducted in Bombay by my creative director (Roger Dondis-formerly of Wild Brain). I've been invited to sit on the Indian Federation of Commerce, FICCI Entertainment Committee. Hopefully the participation will give animation a higher profile in the country."

"As for Toonz, we have a couple of very large ventures. We're beginning production on our own television series, *The Adventures of Tenali Raman*. It's 26 episodes which we're doing 100% in house. We have a couple of guys from WildBrain who are with us on a contract basis and they're helping to give the shows a little Western pizzazz....but, retaining the Indian flavor. The other project is somewhat of a repeat from last year, but on a much larger scale. We're conducting another Children's Animation Workshop. It's kind of a competition where kids between the ages of 8 and 14 pencil an original story outline and give us an idea of what the characters look like. We choose the ten we think are most promising and we make a film with them. They serve as the writer/director. Last year, it was a localized event...only in the state (Kerala) of our studio. It was intended to "thank" the community for receiving our studio so well and making us feel welcome. We had 1,000 entries and turned out some great little films. In fact, one of the films has been accepted into final competition at Positano's Cartoons on the Bay. This year we're doing it nationwide and in partnership with Cartoon Network-India. We've been told to expect between 50,000 and 100,000 entries...and, again we'll choose ten. I'll send you a copy of last years films. I think you'll enjoy them." (Dan McHale from Wild Brain is working at Toonz along with Roger Dondis.)

WARNING: A CHRISTIAN EXTREMIST CLAIMS MACINTOSH COMPUTERS ARE PART OF A AN ATHEIST/PAGAN PLOT Dr. Richard Paley writes in *Objective: Christian Ministries*, "Evolutionism Propaganda," that, "these propagandists aren't just targeting the young. Take for example Apple Computers, makers of the popular Macintosh line of computers. The real operating system hiding under the newest version of the Macintosh operating system (MacOS X) is called... Darwin! That's right, new Macs are based on **Darwinism!** While they currently don't advertise this fact to consumers, it is well known among the computer elite, who are mostly Atheists and Pagans. Furthermore, the Darwin OS is released under an "Open Source" license, which is just another name for Communism. They try to hide all of this under a facade of shiny, 'lickable' [editor -likable?] buttons, but the truth has finally come out: **Apple Computers promote Godless Darwinism and Communism.**"

"But is this really such a shock? Lets look for a moment at Apple Computers. Founded by long haired hippies, this company has consistently supported 60's counter-cultural 'values'. But there are even darker undertones to this company than most are aware of. Consider the name of the company and its logo: an apple with a bite taken out of it. This is clearly a reference to the Fall, when Adam and Eve were tempted with an apple by the serpent. It

is now Apple Computers offering us temptation, thereby aligning themselves with the forces of darkness..."

This strange article goes on to attack the company's motto "think different" as mind control (advertising). "They want us to think different than our Christian upbringing, to reject all the values that we have been taught and to heed not the message of the Lord Jesus Christ!"

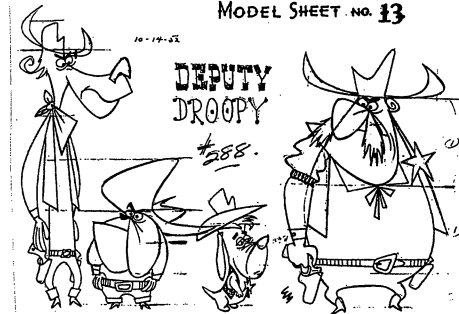
"Given the now obvious anti-Christian and cultish nature of Apple Computers, is it any wonder that they have decided to base their newest operating system on Darwinism? This just reaffirms the position that Darwinism is an inherently anti-Christian philosophy spread through propaganda and subliminal trickery, not a science as its brainwashed followers would have us believe."

<http://207.67.219.101/objective/propaganda.html>

note: I e-mailed the above to a few friends. One wrote back, "Now I am convinced that the Christian right are a bunch of paranoid, gun toting, illiterate, mental midgets. If I didn't know better I'd think they have been 'smokin somthin' to come up with this type of incredulous drivel. By the way Karl, what were you doing on a Christian extremist web site anyway?" - The article was sent to me by a fellow journalist.

PUBLICATIONS

MODEL SHEET NO. 13



"ANIMATION BLAST #8" IS A MIGHTY FINE ISSUE

The most important part of the issue is a 16 page illustrated interview with Ed Benedict whose career began at Disney in the early 1930's, included time at Lantz, at MGM with Tex Avery and work doing layouts, models and story sketches for Hanna-Barbera starting with a project that became *The Ruff and Reddy Show*. He also did the original designs for several other well known characters like a guy named Fred, a woman named Wilma, a dog named Huckleberry, a bear named Yogi, etc. Ed isn't pleased with what happened to his designs once they left his drawing board. When asked if he likes the finished H/B cartoons he replied, "No, no, no, I think the way the guys drew them stunk. I don't think they had any respect or regard, or gave a damn with what their thing looked like..." His discussions about people he worked with earlier in his career are more positive. This is an excellent and honest sounding interview.

While the article on Benedict is reason enough to look for a copy at Tower Records or to order one by mail, the article "Analyzing Ed" by John Kricfalusi is another reason to read this issue. He discusses Ed's abilities as a character designer. There are also several excellent illustrated articles about artists Oscar Grillo, Teddy Newton (*Mulan, Stinky Cheese Man, Iron Giant*), Gary Baseman and Tim Bjorklund.

The 48 page issue includes 16 pages in color and there are no ads. Send \$6 to *Animation Blast*, Box 260491, Encino, CA 91426-0491 animationblast.com

"ANIMATION JOURNAL #9" IS OUT *Animation Journal* is an annual publication dedicated to the history, theory and criticism of animation created throughout the world in its many forms. The price for one issue of *Animation Journal* (individual subscription within the US) is \$10, including postage. Back issues are available at a 10% discount for orders of two or more. Contact: Maureen Furniss, Editor, *Animation Journal*, 108 Hedge Nettle Crossing, Savannah, GA 31406-7220. For more information, **contact: editor@animationjournal.com**

WARNING: SECOND RATE STOP-MOTION BALL JOINTS ARE BEING SOLD AT A DISCOUNT Getting a bad ball joint is a bummer according to a member of our chapter who bought some. The person selling them in a state North of ours wouldn't take them back when the animator complained so beware. The buyer had to hire a machinist and to correct the problem. So much for bargains...

TRAVEL

KARL COHEN'S BASEBALL PROGRAM WAS A HIT IN NEW YORK by K.C. My wife and I were in New York for Easter. It was a wonderful 6 day whirlwind visit where I presented 2 different film programs at the American Museum of Natural History, partied with animator Bill Plympton and his guests, spent a day at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, visited the Tenement Museum in the Lower East Side, saw an exceptional production of *Mornings at Seven* with an all star cast (in previews), toured the Nickelodeon studio where they make *Blues Clues*, a show for young kids; saw ground zero and.... As for ground zero, seeing the fence around a nearby church covered with messages about the missing was just as moving as seeing the enormous hole and the magic blue lights that shine upward to remind us where the towers had been.



Bill and Karl

Introducing my film programs at the American Museum of Natural History was a real pleasure. I grew up enjoying numerous visits to the museum, mainly to see their NW Coast Indian collection and to visit aunt Mary in her research lab behind the scenes at the museum. So being on their stage was a real honor. I wish my parents and Mary were alive and could have been there to share the experience. I did have several friends in the audience both days.

The Saturday program was about cartoons that depict pearls in them. Monday we went back to the museum and saw their exceptional exhibit on pearls. It was full of amazing items - crowns, jewelry, paintings, photographs, video clips, etc. The Saturday audience was full of kids and the museum had printed my introduction to the show, so I scrapped my prepared talk and addressed the kids on why old animation was an exciting art form and how it differed from what is on TV today. I talked about learning to use one's imagination and about what made some of the films in the program so special. I touched on how the animation industry developed in NYC, not in Hollywood and I warned parents that they, not their kids, might be "shocked" by pre-code images in 2 of the shorts. Gosh, there were topless mermaids!

Sunday I had a full house despite it being Easter. There was an extra fee to see my baseball program (the Saturday program was free), but that didn't keep the fans away. Sunday I had an older audience. The talk before the films went smoothly, but after the screening I had a nut in the crowd who wanted to know about pan-animalism or some phrase like that in Disney's animation. Before his question/discussion got too absurd I reminded him that much of animation's content came from NY comic strip artists and from other forms of literature. He didn't like it when I suggested Disney and other studios were simply part of a long tradition in literature and that Walt hadn't invented a new religion or whatever it was that he thought he saw going on. He didn't continue with the discussion.

Animator Howard Beckerman and his wife Iris were in the audience on Sunday. He said, "it was great hearing people laugh at 'real' animation, instead of the limited, dialogue driven animation." He teaches History of Animation at the School of Visual Arts, is the author of *Animation, The Whole Story*, Ameron House, 2001, and has written hundreds of excellent articles over the years. His career in animation spans about 50 years (Mighty Mouse, Popeye, Casper the Friendly Ghost, Winky-Dink, work for *Sesame Street*, lots of ads, etc.) and hopefully he will present our chapter with a talk and book signing later this year. I hope to review his book in our next newsletter.

After Sunday's event I went to lunch with Nik and Nancy Phelps who flew out from SF to attend my programs and to partake of Bill's party (they run the Sprocket Ensemble that performs Nik's music with new animated works). We discovered an interesting menu in a window almost across the street from the museum. "Estiatorlo Dias" turned out to be an exceptional Greek seafood establishment with fresh fish flown in from Europe. The menu was extensive and the flavors exceptional. There wasn't any of the usual falafel stuff that too many people think is Greek food. Instead I tasted wonderful tarama salad, spinach pie, muscles in a rich sauce of ouzo, fetta, tomato and papaya; bbq octopus, a fish named Diana, etc. The bill for 5 people on Sunday came to \$104 with tip, and a bit more on Monday when we went back with other friends and two people ordered a grilled prawn dish that was \$24 a plate. This place is a great find and perhaps you may have the chance to enjoy it someday. It is at 103 West 77th Street, right next to the NW corner of Columbus and 77th across from the museum (212) 721-6603

Another fine food experience was at Lalo Café. We were taken there on Saturday by museum staff members and we thoroughly enjoyed a 4 hour lunch. They have a 12 or 16 page menu and specialize in desserts from around the world! The pastries were as exceptional as they looked in the display cases. (Lalo Café, 201 West 83rd St. off Amsterdam Ave.)

We met John Canemaker for brunch on Friday as he was leaving town that afternoon. He isn't sure if he will be writing another book soon. He is too busy teaching animation at NYU (he is acting department chair for the moment) and he is anxious to do another personal animated film.

Bill Plympton's gathering Saturday night in my honor was certainly a grand social occasion for the animation world. He told us it was the first time he had held such a large gathering in his loft space (home and studio) even though he had lived there

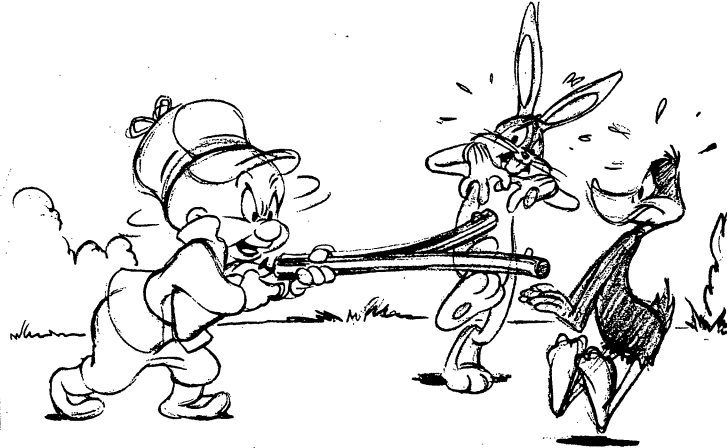


Signe Baumann Denise McEvoy-Cohen for many years. It was a who's who of NY animation from George Griffin, John "Dirty Birdy" Dilworth, Jimmy Picker and Michael Sporn to young talents on the rise. I talked with Deborah Solomon who created *Mrs. Matisse*, Xeth Feinberg who does *Dirty Duck*, David Levy who is president of ASIFA-East and a director on *Blues Clues*, Signe Baumann from Latvia who created *Natasha*, and other animators. Nik Phelps played music at the party. We talked, ate and drank too much and work was screened. What a wonderful night. Thanks Bill for being such a good friend and for your continued support of ASIFA (I've known him since the late 1980's when we held a party for him).

Among the news items I picked up at the party are Michael Sporn is completing a short personal film. A clip from his recently completed short *Mona Mon Amore* can be seen on awn.com.

Jimmy Picker has created a clay animated work that was over 30 minutes long, but he isn't satisfied with it and is in the process of editing it down to under 25 minutes. He won an Oscar in 1983 for *Sundae in New York* and he won an Oscar nomination for *Jimmy the C.*, 1977.

THE BALBOA THEATRE AND ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO PRESENT



A CHUCK JONES TRIBUTE

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Projected on a BIG screen in a 340 seat auditorium - Enjoy some of his
finest works the way they were meant to be seen
NO VIDEO, NO CANNED LAUGHTER, NO TV COMMERCIALS



THURSDAY, MAY 30, 7:30 PM

ASIFA-SF MEMBERS AND FRIENDS \$5 ADMISSION

Show this page of your newsletter as proof of membership.

General admission \$7.50, seniors and children under 12 \$5

Enjoy great classics like *DUCK AMUCK* and rarities like *HIGH NOTE* and *THE DOT AND THE LINE*.
Laugh at the wild goings on of Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Roadrunner, Coyote and other delightful
stars in this 21 cartoon salute.
ONE NIGHT ONLY - DON'T MISS IT!

Balboa Theatre, 3630 Balboa at 38th Ave. (415) 221-8184



Nik Phelps and John Dilworth

meetings wearing a space suit with silver boots.

Bill Plympton was excited about his new feature opening in New York and Los Angeles. *Mutant Aliens* has already broken even thanks to its success in the overseas market. A few days after the party Bill was going to move his studio out of his loft to a space a short distance from his home. His next feature will be a bigger production with a larger budget. He surprised me by saying each of his previous animated features were produced for under \$200,000 each! (Advertising, print cost, posters, phone and other promotional costs were extra.) He proves you don't need a \$75 million budget to create an exciting entertaining animated feature.

So that is what I did on my spring vacation.

FESTIVALS

OTTAWA INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL IS AN IMPORTANT EVENT TO ENTER AND THERE IS NO ENTRY FEE! The deadline is July 1 for an October 2 - 6 event. It is held every other year, has an international jury of noted animators and it attracts guests from all over the world. For details and entry form for North America's most important animation festival (613) 232-8769, Suite 120, 2 Daly Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 6E2, awn.com/ottawa or info@animationfestival.ca

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL May 31 and June 30 deadlines. Previews on VHS tape. Non-competitive. (415) 383-5256 mvff.com

ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO
P.O. Box 14516
San Francisco, CA 94114



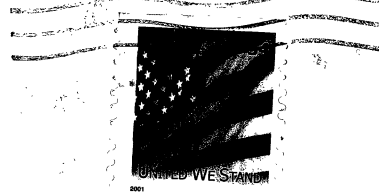
This issue was written by Karl Conen and proofread by Pete Davis. The mailing crew included Tara Packard, Nancy Phelps and Ron Seawright. A \$22 membership includes a subscription to our newsletter.

**HAVE YOU VISITED OUR WEB SITE -
ASIFA-SF.ORG**



INDIE FILM PAGE.COM PRESENTS THE 2ND ANNUAL CONEY ISLAND SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Deadline is Aug. 1 @ \$15 per entry and Aug. 14 @ \$20. Event is September 21 and 22 at Sideshows by the Seashore, Coney Island, New York. The Festival is open to filmmakers working in all genres and formats. Being in this event may not win you fame or fortune, but it sounds like a great place for a festival! (I suspect they don't show serious documentaries.) Contact Rob Leddy, indiefilmpage.com, Bowling Green Station, PO Box 228, New York, NY 10274-0228 There is more information on his web site including the program for the first festival.

BUY YOURSELF AN AWARD You might get a better deal if you go to a pawn shop, buy a used trophy and changing the plaque, but for an entry fee of \$50 and \$150 for the statue, you can be a proud Aurora winner. It is too late to enter this year's event and they don't have an animation category anyway. I'm amazed that there are several of these non-events now. They look slick on paper, but there is no screening, no awards ceremony and it isn't clear who judges them. The Aurora Awards simply say they "invite you to enter your best work and receive the recognition you deserve." Another similar "event" mentioned in a recent newsletter was just as vague. auroraawards.com



6/30/2002 Local
John Peterson
12 Bishop Lane
Menlo Park, CA 94025

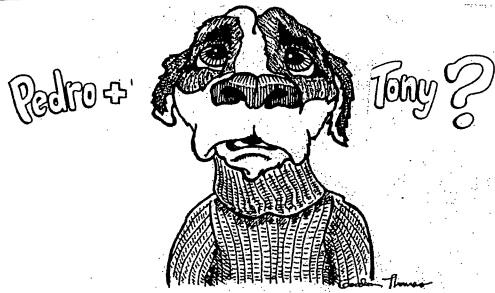


ASIFA

SAN FRANCISCO

The International Film Association
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JUNE, 2002



DON THOMAS' "PEDRO+TONY?" WILL SCREEN AT THE CASTRO THEATRE SATURDAY, JUNE 22 AT 11 PM IN A PROGRAM OF ANIMATED SHORTS as part of the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. "I am especially excited it will play in our home town again at such a high profile event. I may even bring out the chicken suit to celebrate!" Don says. He hinted that he is planning some outrageous street theatre to hype the screening, but as of press time refused to disclose details. "Nothing rude, well...I take that back. Let's just say I see some 'interspecies' marriage/divorce ceremonies happening in front of the Castro Theatre." *Pedro+Tony?* first appeared as a comic strip in a Santa Cruz newspaper in 1995, and was originally a musical when it started as a short film.

The film is also scheduled to screen in June at the Milan-Bologna Lesbian and Gay Film Festival in Italy, and at the New York Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. In July it will be at Outfest, The Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. *Pedro+Tony?* premiered at Slamdance 2002, in Utah where Don was first seen wearing his chicken costume. It later showed at the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival (March) and just wrapped up at the Maryland Film Festival where it received a great response.

Don laments that film festivals are not paying anything to show his work. "Shorts have a hard time getting funding in general", he says. Don is seeking a distributor for *Pedro+Tony?* He is also working with an agent in LA on developing a series based on *Pedro + Tony?* for cable TV. To top it off, a well known stop-motion animator has agreed to lend his name to the project to help it get going. Don also says, "I am about halfway done writing the first draft for a stop-motion feature. It is amazing how long it takes to write a good, thoroughly entertaining film." Don can be reached at deebo@sfsu.edu. program details in local screening section

SF STATE'S ANIMATION FILM FINALS SHOWED OFF THE DEPARTMENT'S ABILITY TO WORK WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF STYLES, TECHNIQUES AND CONTENT As expected there was 2D and 3D cgi, cel, various materials on paper, an assortment of cutouts and object animation plus several digital experiments. Nice surprises included a lack of sick and twisted works and the appearance of two strong socially conscious projects. Stephanie Ide's mixed-media *Stop This War* questioned the credibility of our president and Hagop Kaneboughazian's

Yanke Kezi was a remembrance of the Armenian tragedies early in the last century.

The most impressive work demonstrating traditional drawing ability and smooth animation was the line art reel of Jiseok Jeong. His *Knight* showed his ability to depict a sword fight, but unlike most knights in shining armor fantasies his film had an unusual ending.

Several clever short stories were shown. My favorite was Juwana Samman's *The Great Rescue*. It is a rescue of a fair maiden from a shark. It turns out to be a young boy's fantasy inspired after seeing a female playmate in a wading pool with a shark flotation device. Her 3D cgi work reminded me of CAL Arts films by guys who are now directors at Pixar.

Jenny Napier's *Little Suzie's Revenge* was a hand animated work with a clever story/concept. It got a lot of laughter from the audience.

Joe Atkin's *Cuttles* was another crowd pleaser. The unfinished work stars a cute wild animal (a teddy bear) with a bad attitude.

An unexpected surprise was *Nirvana*, a short Oskar Fischinger inspired abstract exercise by Judith Comstock, Phillip Lee and Laura Tulloss. *Otto Manneheim* by Wade McClave is a handsome digital photo montage using old photographs. Another striking work was Eji Yared's *The Dance*. It has strong camera angles and a tear jerking story.

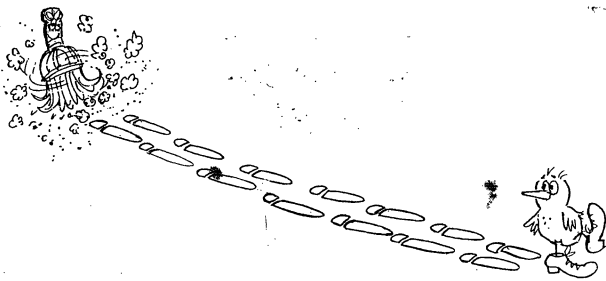
I was also delighted by the number of unusual flour sack exercises including a funny *The Bite* by Elisheva Gorlik in which the sack becomes a vampire. Gorlik's short *Coffee* got the biggest laugh of the event.

The program included about 55 works from classes taught by Patricia Amlin, Martha Gorzcki, Jane Veeder and Lippy. Congratulations to all for a fine show.

At the party after the show I was pleased to see how well the group interacted with each other. Unlike most university disciplines where your output is your own work, animation (and live action film) is often a group effort. I suspect many lifetime friendships have been formed in State's animation classrooms. KC

ADVANCE REVIEW OF THE ANIMATION ART SHOW COMING TO THE CARTOON ART MUSEUM

A friend who saw it on display in Orange County writes, "The show is pretty good for what it is. Most of it is from Mike Glad's collection so you know the pieces will be good examples." It includes storyboards and art from classic TV shows plus toys based on those programs. Highlights for the person who saw the show included Ed Benedict's rough designs of Barney Rubble and the original title card from the *Alvin Show*. He also spotted "some historical gaffs, like they credited a *Superfriends* cel setup to Filmation when it was actually the Alex Toth Hanna-Barbera stuff. (I worked on some in 1978, that is how I know). It's an interesting collection of mainstream TV animation."



ABOUT OUR JULY/AUGUST EVENT, MEET HOWARD BECKERMAN. HEAR TALES OF HIS LONG CAREER AS AN ANIMATOR IN NYC AND FIND OUT ABOUT HIS NEW BOOK, "ANIMATION, THE WHOLE STORY" I first knew of Howard from his articles full of practical advice for independent animators published by *Filmmakers Newsletter* in the early 1970's.. In the late 1980's he treated our ASIFA chapter to a wonderful program on his amazing career in NYC with Popeye, Mighty Mouse, Heckle and Jeckle, Mr. Magoo, Winky-Dink and other stars. Now he is back to talk about his career and his new book.

Howard has been teaching animation at the School for Visual Arts and Parsons School of Design for over 25 years. His book is an excellent primer filled with practical advice for young animators and professionals, plus there is an excellent 50 page history of animation that includes discussions of works from Europe, the Americas and Asia (from prehistoric cave art to *Ren and Stimpy* and Bill Plympton). There are chapters on drawing, character design, layout, animation, color, filming, sound, editing, computer animation and the business of animation.

His chapter on drawing is something students need to read before they bog down with Richard Williams' book. He talks about gesture, weight, balance, gravity, solidity, proportions, silhouettes, your sketch book, routines, perspective and much more. His chapter on writing covers not only the basics of story structure (conflicts, believability, character interaction, gag structure, etc.) but also how to indicate music, effects, camera moves, where to get ideas, and a lot other topics. His final chapter on business suggest ways to get started, how to find work and valuable advice on opening a small company.

Animation, The Whole Story covers an enormous topic surprisingly well. It offers sound practical advice on every page. It is lovingly written by an author who has spent over 50 years learning the art and commerce of animation. He has also spent several decades sharing that knowledge both as a teacher and writer. The book has been praised by Leonard Maltin, John Canemaker and others and I'm delighted to add my name to that list. Karl Cohen, ASIFA-SF President

A FEW MORE DETAILS ABOUT WHAT IS COMING SOON FROM PIXAR For the summer of 2003, Pixar plans to release an underwater adventure titled *Finding Nemo*. The following year, the company will release *The Incredibles*, an action-adventure comedy about a family of undercover superheroes struggling to live a quiet suburban life. For the summer of 2005, Pixar is planning *Cars*, a "high-octane" comedy directed by John Lasseter. It will star an assortment of cars as characters that "get their kicks on Route 66."

MONDO MEDIA IS RUNNING A SPOOF OF MTV'S "THE REAL WORLD" The new show by Don Asmussen and Lippy is called *The IsRael World* and features the two world leaders discussing sex, holy wars, sex, body issues, oh, and sex. You can view it at israel.mondominishows.com

MARCO BERTOLDO JOINS MONDO MEDIA Marco Bertoldo will assume creative responsibilities for Mondo's 3D animation division. He is best known for his 3D series *Gone Bad*, which was shown in the Sundance Online Film Festival 2001 and 2002, and has been seen at our open screenings. He has worked as a freelance animation director for Mondo in the past on projects for Fox Interactive, Activision, Crystal Dynamics and 3DO.

FATBOX PRODUCES GOOD GUYS ANIMATED AD Norman Quebedeau wrote in mid-May, "Last week at Fatbox Productions in Redwood City, I did the character design, storyboarded and animated a Good Guys Stores ad. It will be broadcast in the Bay Area before and during the Memorial Day weekend."

NIK PHELPS, WHO DOES MUSIC FOR ANIMATED SHORTS, DID THE MUSICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COCKETTES' FEATURE AT THE CASTRO The film does a great job capturing the spirit of this fleeting moment in time. The original footage is mostly non-synch and amateurish hand held camera work, but the sound track is so well composed and edited that the story comes through and almost every word is understood. I was mighty impressed that they found the right footage and could capture the spirit of this band of crazies. Congratulations to Nik and everybody else who helped to bring this film to the screen.

TOON BOOM TECHNOLOGIES IS OFFERING ASIFA-SF MEMBERS A 33% DISCOUNT TILL JUNE 25 on their complete 2D animation software for creative professionals. Versions available for Windows and Mac. "With optimized output to Macromedia Flash and Quicktime, you can easily publish your creations on the web and beyond." Please tell them ASIFA-SF sent you as we will get 10% of each sale we generate. The discount price of their software package is \$250. Contact Michael Martin (514) 278-8666, 7 Ave. Laurier Est, Montreal, Quebec, Canada toonboom.com and tbspromo02@toonboomstudio.com

BILL BREITHAUPt WRITES, "Right ON! I just looked at the newsletter and I'm soooo Stoked that you mentioned my name and film. you are so good , that You didn't even say that it was a - CENSORED - film :) I'm trying to keep that one up, for as long as possible. Before THE MAN finds out. O-well ,its a freaking ad, just for them. I cranked up the old lightwave and now I'm working on a short animation about 4 SkateRats. I really enjoyed your last event (Richard Williams' book is AWESOME !!!) Again thanks for the mention. My mom was so happy."

A couple of weeks later he wrote, "Hey Karl, I guess the blurb payed off. Check Upwardrising.com - again They put me on the title page as a showcase. SOOOOO.STOKED! Thanks again Bill Breithaupt, Adrenaline Network "

LOCAL SCREENINGS

Wednesday - Thursday, June 5-6, **METROPOLIS** (from Japan) 7 & 9:20, mat. Wed. at 2, the Red Vic on Haight St.

Friday - Sunday, June 14-16, **VISUAL EFFECTS SOCIETY ANNUAL FESTIVAL** at the Rafael. Eleven different panels will discuss some of the developments of this remarkable field. Ray Harryhausen, John Dykstra (*Spiderman*), Douglas Trumbull (*Blade Runner*, *Close Encounters*, etc.) lots of Pixar, Tippett and ILM people, and other luminaries. It may be expensive if you are a starving student (\$18 a panel or \$300 for all 11 two hour events), but what an amazing chance to hear these great artists talk about their work! Since Harryhausen sold out his last appearance at the Rafael you may want to order advance tickets. (310) 315-6055 tickets@vesfestival.org and to see a program vesfestival.org

Topics are Fri. 9:30 AM, 15 Years of Pixar; 1 PM, *Spider-Man*; 4 PM, Creating Characters; 8 PM, An Evening with Douglas Trumbull; Sat. 10 AM, *Black Hawk Downs*; 1:30, *Star Wars II*; 4:30, *Blade Runner* Retrospective; Sun. at 10, 1:30 and 4:30, *Star Wars II*



Monday, June 17, SF State's animation program and ASIFA-

SF present **MIKE BARRIER, IN-PERSON, AUTHOR OF "HOLLYWOOD CARTOONS: AMERICAN ANIMATION IN ITS GOLDEN AGE,"** a talk, screening of rare films and book signing. at 7:30 PM, SF State, August Coppola Theater (Fine Arts Bldg., Room 101) This is a rare chance to meet a really great animation scholar. His 650 page book is a major accomplishment.

Saturday, June 22, at 8:45 PM, Castro Theatre **REVOLUTIONARY GIRL UTENA: THE MOVIE** by Kunihiko Ikuhara, Japan 1999, In Japanese with English subtitles, from the creator of the popular anime *Sailor Moon*. A new student comes to a strange school and is caught up in a battle for the affection of a beautiful and mysterious girl. This genderbender is the first lesbian anime feature. Director Kunihiko will be attending the screening.

Saturday, June 22, 11 PM, at the Castro, **CARTOONS CAN ALSO BE SAD** (several directors will attend this show) *The Ambiguously Gay Duo #9: Trouble Coming Twice*, J.J. Sedelmaier; *Blue Tuesday*, Lisa G; *Sexy*, Tom Whitman and Dustin Woehrmann, *Three Things My Mother Never Told Me*, Lisa Nielsen, Canada; *Twinkies*, David Collins and Damian Mellin, Canada; *A Duel*, Thurit Antonia Kremer, Germany; *Tales from the Powder Room*, Darren Burgess, Australia and *Barbie Can Also Be Sad*, Albertina Carri, Argentina

Fri., Sat., June 28-29, **WAVE TWISTERS**, animated hip-hop, many of my students think it is "way cool." I say the images, writing and music suck, but I'm not a young hip hop fan. 7:15, 9:15, Sat. at 2, Red Vic on Haight



Wed. to Sun. June 26 - 30 (no show on Fri. June 28), 7:30 PM, **THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE ACHMED**, 1926, by Lotte Reiniger, Germany, with live music by George Lamman Ensemble. This is the oldest remaining animated feature (no prints remain of an earlier work from Argentina). It uses silhouette, cutout animation. Newly restored print with color tints, 63 minutes, 16mm. at the Fine Arts Theater in Berkeley, 2451 Shattuck at Haste. (510) 848-1143.

NATIONAL NEWS



BILL PLYMPTON'S "MUTANT ALLIENS" GOT A RAVE REVIEW IN "NEWSDAY" John Anderson, a staff writer, wrote in the April 19, 2002 issue, *Star Sex, Animated 'Aliens' boldly goes ...* (3 1/2 STARS) **MUTANT ALIENS** (U). "Woke up this morning/With light in my eyes ... " Bill Plympton, subversive animator extraordinaire, goes extraterrestrial with a characteristically irreverent, reality-warping tale of corruption, carnality and lovably weird creatures. Written and directed by Plympton. With the voices of Dan McComas, Francine Lobas, George Casden, Matthew Brown, Kevin Kolack, Amy Allison. 1:23 (adult language, adult situations, animated sex, nudity, shameless desecration of the human form). At Pioneer Cinema and Cinema Village in Manhattan.

THAT THE OSCARS recognized animated feature filmmaking this year probably won't do much for the career of Bill Plympton, who probably doesn't recognize the Oscars. Although once nominated for an Academy Award (for the short film "Your Face"), Plympton is such a subversively singular talent that his films make the bathroom-happy "Shrek" seem like the very Disney films it mocked.

In *Mutant Aliens* - a tale of betrayal, lust and governmental corruption (oooooh) - Plympton exposes himself, as usual, as less obsessed with sex than with sexual obsession, but totally fascinated by the tortured excesses he can impose on the human body. Mostly abandoning the throbbing, rhythmic tic that has given most of his work an innate nervous tension - films such as "I Married a Strange Person," or "The Tune," the first animated film in competition at Sundance - he maintains his signature animosity for the power-mad, and his affection for the crazed-in-love.

Sex and love are forms of insanity for Plympton, whose current heroine, Josie - who bites off the finger of the insidious Dr. Frubar when he sends her astronaut father, Earl Jensen, into unreturnable space - grows up to be the classic Plympton babe; just as Robert Crumb will inevitably return

his pencil to the big-legged Amazon he once drew for Zap Comix, so Plympton has a certain type (Josie resembles the wife of "I Married a Strange Person") whose not-so-conflicted attitude toward sex is exemplified by the angel-devil debate that rages on her shoulders. In Josie's case, it's a little nun on her right shoulder that says no no no and a little floozy on her left that says yes yes yes, but as the argument disintegrates into a violent volley of sexual expletives, you certainly know where Plympton's coming from.

Earl, his "accidental" marooning used by Frubar to generate support and funding for the nefarious Department of Space, returns one day in the company of a band of aliens - mutant aliens, whose various talents can't really be explained here, but who love Earl and set out to undo Frubar. The plot is less important, though, than how Plympton exercises the particular fascinations he has with body functions, body hair, human noses and the human body in general; a kind of prologue to the piece, in which various physical topography is mistaken (intentionally) for other geographic areas, is a sort of a self-effacing swipe by Plympton at his own obsessions, as well as audience assumptions. But "Mutant Aliens" generally has that sense about it - that it's a work by an artist so in control of both his medium and his message that he can improvise like a jazzman, dropping a riff from Mozart into a tune by Charlie Parker with the full confidence that what he's doing is as valid as a Rembrandt and as timeless as a Looney Tune."

PLYMPTON CREATED 3 ADS ON THE WEB FOR WILSON SPORTING GOODS They were created with Acme Filmworks in LA, run by Ron Diamond (he brought Cordell Barker to the Bay Area for our March event) The three spots involve tennis players being mistreated by opponents using hot Wilson tennis rackets. They are traumatized by the experience. Flash animator Andrea Breitman traced Bill's drawings and animated them using Flash and Quicktime. See them at wilsonsports.com

JOHN KRICFALUSI TO DIRECT 9 NEW EPISODES OF "THE REN AND STIMPY SHOW" FOR THE TNT NETWORK About 10 years ago he was fired from his show by Nickelodeon for going over budget, not meeting deadlines and other differences. The show directed by others were nowhere as good. In May, Viacom hired him back. Happy-Happy, Joy-Joy!

"QUEER DUCK" UPDATE The show Xeth Feinberg directs for Showtime/Sho.com is "Queer Duck." In a recent e-mail he wrote, "I'm just finishing up 15 new 3 minute episodes (making 20 total) that appear both on the website and on the cable channel... it looks like there will be more... and 'perhaps' also a Queer Duck film in the works." mishmashmedia.com

SIGNE BAUMANE, THE NAUGHTY LATVIAN ANIMATOR, LIVES UP TO HER REPUTATION Her new X-rated web animation is at etaoin.com/fff/ The title is also the name of her most recent film. Sprockets shows it at some of their performances. Hope you find it funny. I did.

RICHARD CONDIE AND NELVANA BUILD THE ARK awn.com reports, "The Apocalypse is coming in 30 minutes, but ever-resourceful hero Sam has built an atomic resistant Ark in his backyard. While he and his family watch from the safety of the Ark, war, pestilence and disease rain down without so much as denting the body of the great boat. So goes the plot of *The Ark*, a creation of Richard Condie (*The Big Shit*) in association with Nelvana. This half-hour animated pilot is scheduled to air on Canada's CBC in fall 2002."

DIGITAL DADA WEB ANIMATION by Brian Turner in England. Search for *Sort out Your Head* or *The Surreal Adventures of Fluffy the Cat*. They remind me of Larry Jordan's work. They are in Shockwave (slow download time).

SIGGRAPH COMPUTER ANIMATION FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES THE WINNERS Winner of the Best Animated Short is *The Cathedral* by Tomek Baginski, Platige Image, Warsaw. It is based on the novel *The Cathedral* by Jacek Dukaj. It is the story of a pilgrim who arrives at the edge of the known world and finds a cathedral, a place full of secrets. "The cathedral is not only a building, and the pilgrim is not only a man." The short was animated and rendered in 3D Studio Max, painted in Photoshop, composited with AfterEffects, and edited with Softimage DS. *The Cathedral* was selected as the Best Animated Short by unanimous vote.

The Jury Award was given to *The Deserter*, by Olivier Coulon, Supinfocom, Paris. This story is set in a prostitute's room where WWI deserters have found refuge. One of them thinks he is a bird who can finally, in one leap, rise above the events around him.

HOW TO MAKE MONEY IN ANIMATION! Somebody recently sold a 16mm print of a home movie version of a Mickey Mouse cartoon in its original box. It was a short version of the film (probably silent) that most film collectors normally avoid or only pay a few buck for (under \$10, even if it comes in the original box). Due to some great copy the bidding on the following item had reached over \$1,800 when somebody told me to see what was being sold. The item description was: "FOLKS-HERE IT IS-MY DAD WORKED FOR DISNEY PRODUCTIONS IN THE 1930'S AND WHEN HE DIED 6 YEARS HE LEFT ME WITH THIS GEM. I AM NOT A DISNEY COLLECTOR THEREFORE I AM GOING TO AUCTION THIS PIECE OF HISTORY. IT COMES WITH THE ORIGINAL BOX IN PRISTINE CONDITION.IT SAYS IT IS 180 FEET OF CAROON.THIS PROBABLY CAN BE CONVERTED TO CELLS.CHECK MY SELLING FEEDBACK FOR ITEMS THAT I HAVE SOLD.THEY ARE ALL QUALITY ITEMS.ALL SALES ARE FINAL.HAPPY BIDDING....."

I e-mailed this item to several friends and Kevin Coffey commented "It proves P. T. Barnum was right, there is a sucker born every minute." Coffey notes these 16mm prints "were sanctioned by the Disney studios for home use starting in the mid-1930's and are quite common today." He also asked me **how do you make cels from a 16mm frame of film?** KC

WALT DISNEY'S FIRST STUDIO IN KANSAS CITY IS BEING RESTORED A webcam has been set up, but my server couldn't connect me to the site. homeonthecam.com

"LA TIMES" PRINTS A NOSTALGIC STORY ABOUT SPIKE AND MIKE ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF DISPLAYING "CUTTING-EDGE" ANIMATION

Writer Michael Mallory calls them "the Ben and Jerry of animation." He says they run the business with only six prints of a given show and that a two week sold-out run can gross almost \$100,000. Spike is presently looking for a sponsor so he can expand the festival's distribution. Writer Jerry Beck is reported to have a contract with the publisher Abrams to write a book on the history of the company. The article appeared Friday, May 10 in the paper's Calendar section.

"LA TIMES" RAN A FEATURE STORY ABOUT LESLIE IWERK'S WORKS ABOUT UB IWERKS

in the Sunday, May 12 issue. It covered her quest to inform the world about her grandfather. It discussed his long career in animation and writer Barbara Tannenbaum discussed how Leslie grew interested in him. She met with Roy Disney in 1994 and he helped her get funding from the Disney Corporation for an hour documentary. It was green lighted by Disney in April, 1998 with a \$288,000 budget. At the end of 1998 Disney agreed to expand it to a 90 minute feature with a \$600,000 budget. The film premiered in October, 1999 at the El Capitan Theater in L.A. ASIFA-SF had the honor of having Leslie Iwerks show us her excellent film last summer.

THE UCLA ANIMATION WORKSHOP PRESENTS PROM 2002 their student animation festival on Saturday June 8. If you are in the area shows are at 7 and 9:15 PM at the James Bridges Theater. Free, RSVP (310) 825-5829

DOES ANYBODY GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THIS TYPE OF HYPE? ALL IT REALLY SAYS IS SONY WANTS TO TRY MAKING A FEW BUCKS PRODUCING ANIMATION The item means jobs for animators which is great news, but that isn't what was reported. The chest thumping executives with big egos announced the event this way: "Sony Pictures Establishes Feature Animation Unit, May 09, 2002, Fresh off the record-breaking success of the effects-heavy feature film *Spider Man*, Sony Pictures Digital Entertainment (SPDE) has announced they will form an all CG feature animation division, to be headed by former DreamWorks executives Sandra Rabins and Penney Finkelman Cox. Rabins and Cox will be responsible for the development and production of all-CG animated features and will report to SPDE president Yair Landau. In addition, the new feature animation unit will work closely with Sony's visual effects unit Sony Imageworks. Rabins and Cox most recently served as executive producers on..."

The Chronicle business section writer was more down to earth. He re-wrote the story from Sony's press release and mentioned the high grosses of *Shrek* and *Monsters, Inc.* and how Pixar just announced their "first-quarter profit rose 89 percent to \$15.6 million, more than analysts expected..."

"There is money to be made in them thar hills..."

CONTRIBUTE TO ASIFA'S MAGAZINE It may be too late to contribute to their Fall, 2002 issue (June 1 deadline, but there will be other issues. Editor Chris Robinson writes, "We welcome in-depth animator-studio-country-school profiles, a review of a short film, theoretical pieces and in general, smart, well-written pieces with a point of view. We do not want festival reviews, love letters (unless they are for me), recycled pieces or pieces you are writing as a favor to your animator-friend. Generally we seek pieces around 1500 words. They can be in English, French or Russian. We do pay a very crappy fee. If you've got an idea, email Chris Robinson" robinson@asifa.net

ANIMATED TELEVISION SHOW CONFERENCE IN CARDIFF WALES, June 21 and 22. Includes panels on all aspects of financing with top financiers and TV executives.

cartoon-media.be/Media/PFD/Masters/Cardiff.uk.pdf

TECH TV TO AIR THE BRITISH "THUNDERBIRDS" SERIES THIS SUMMER

Cable network TechTV has acquired the rights to the 32 episodes created by Gerry Anderson. *The Thunderbirds* debuted in England in 1965. Today this animated puppet series has cult status in the US and other countries. The program is set in the year 2065, and recounts the adventures of the Tracy Brothers, members of the top secret International Rescue organization, on their quest to save Earth. The shows have been digitally remastered with Dolby Surround Sound.

JOHN CANEMAKER WROTE AN INTELLIGENT ARTICLE ABOUT THE CRISIS TRADITIONAL 2-D ANIMATION IS FACING

It was in *The New York Times*. Sunday, May 12, in their Summer Film Preview section, Canemaker discussed Disney's *Lilo & Stitch* and DreamWorks' *Spirit*, two new animated features that blend traditional 2-D animation with computer generated imagery. He believes that if they are not successful at the box office producers from major studios will probably avoid the traditional 2D cel animation look in the future. He notes that while both films are computer assisted, they retain 2D hand-drawn characters, a technique that "offers human warmth, emotional intimacy, and subtle characterizations that can not yet be completely achieved on computers."

A full page color ad for the film in the same section suggested to me that the film's star is a disgustingly cute creature that I don't want to know. I was glad to read in the article that the film "has the most original story to come from Disney in years." The cute Stitch is mistaken by Lilo to be an ugly dog, but it is actually "an alien experiment from another planet." Lilo is a lonely 6-year old Hawaiian girl. Adults may enjoy the film's music - 6 Elvis Presley hits "sung by The King himself." The article notes that the film concentrates on character development and relationships rather than on technical marvels. Canemaker says the fine watercolor backgrounds are reminiscent of classic mid-1930's Mickey Mouse shorts.

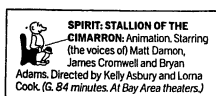
Spirit, which opens May 24, is described as hand-drawn art combined with computer structures so the drawings become 3D. He calls the blend of techniques "seamless." In the opening sequence, "the camera follows a bald eagle

swooping through forests and canyons in one continuous flight, combining thousands of pieces of 2-D and 3-D artwork, 700 painted background elements, and 30 layers of digitally composited images on each film frame. The naturalistic draftsmanship and animation merge with the computer effects to make the story and characters believable."

The article also discussed the ongoing layoffs at Disney, their retraining traditional animators to use computer technology, their upcoming cgi features, upcoming Pixar films and other relevant topics. He ends by discussing Walt as an innovator and concludes "he was known to suggest only half-jokingly that he'd gladly replace his slow and expensive traditional animators with animatronic robots. No doubt Walt would embrace C.G."

KEN KEARNEY COMMENTS ABOUT "SPIRITE" After attended a preview he said, "it was exciting and beautiful to look at....I cried when the Indian guy had to say 'goodbye' to his horse buddy at the end....the theatre was full of kids...they were spellbound....it had some 'lessons' to teach about the old west."

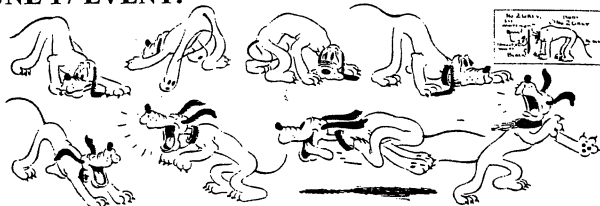
"NY TIMES" REVIEW OF "SPRITE" 5/24/02 was unfortunately quite somber. David Kehr in "An Old- Fashioned Cartoon of the West" felt it needed solid comedy relief, disliked the simplistic characterizations of Native Americans and white settlers, felt the blend of hand-drawn and computer animation was ordinary looking and he missed all the new bells and whistles, etc.



Mick Lasalle in the **SF CHRONICLE** who seems to specialize in reviewing bad films said the producers of *Sprite* started with a good idea, "but they screwed it all

up." He hated the use of voice-overs and music that telegraphed the coming action.

THE FOLLOWING RAN IN OUR APRIL, 2000 NEWSLETTER. IT IS BEING REPRINTED AS BARRIER IS OUR GUEST OF HONOR AT OUR MON., JUNE 17 EVENT!



"HOLLYWOOD CARTOONS: AMERICAN ANIMATION IN ITS GOLDEN AGE" BY MICHAEL BARRIER, Oxford University Press, New York, 1999, \$39.95, 650 pages. This book should be required reading for anybody that has a real interest in the history of the American animated cartoon. One should first have a solid overview of the subject (i.e: read Maltin's *Of Mice and Magic*) and it is helpful if you have seen some of the classics cartoons before you dive into this exceptional work.

Barrier doesn't give you a well rounded history. Instead he has written a remarkably well researched, detailed account about the development of the films he considers the stepping stones and milestones of the industry. The book concentrates on the growth, flowering and decline of the Disney Studio. He also provides a rich and detailed account of the achievements of the people who created Warner Bros. and MGM releases. Another important, well researched chapter is an account of the influence of modern art on the animated cartoon in the 1940s and early 50s (at UPA, Warner Bros. etc.). He has less to say about other studios, but he still offers some new information about Iwerks and other companies..

This isn't a cute trivia book full of dubious facts. Barrier leaves out behind the scenes gossip and other material that distracts from his thesis. He concentrates on the basics of animation history.

He covers important issues like what the artists were doing to improve the quality of their work and what happened when a war, television and other events influenced the development of animated cartoon.

Barrier wrote, edited and published *Funnyworld*, a fanzine in the late 60's and 70s. That was years ago when the people in the book had fairly accurate memories of how things happened. He was in a unique position to interview almost all of key players of the industry. It took him decades to edit and refine his thoughts. It is doubtful that another book of this depth on this period will ever be written.

Some reviewers have been disturbed by Barrier's strong opinions. Anyone who knows enough about animation history and the films to have formed their own opinions should be smart enough to agree or disagree with Barrier without being upset. I find the "controversial" statements add to the book's richness as they challenge your beliefs and make you think about the material from what may be a different perspective.

The book doesn't contain any color reproductions and there are only 50 black and white illustrations in it plus flip books. I have seen most of the films mentioned so I did not feel there was a need for more images when I read the book. I suspect most readers will miss not having illustrations that show the developments and changes mentioned in the text.

Hollywood Cartoons is a book that I thoroughly enjoyed. It is well written and much of the information in it was new to me. I expect to consult the book frequently in the future when I am looking for information (it is well indexed and has hundreds of footnotes). I recommend it to anyone who wants to improve their knowledge of the subject.

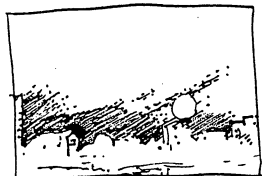
A TRIBUTE TO RICHARD PROTOVIN (1945 - 1991) by John Canemaker. ASIFA was established to celebrate the art of independent animation and unfortunately it is an area neglected by a public fascinated with more commercial aspects of the art. The following is an informative speech Canemaker gave at a retrospective screening in NYC, Thursday, May 9.

Richard Protovin, who died at the tragically young age of 46, was first and always a painter. When he was 25, he transferred his painterly gifts, bountiful energy and enthusiasm to the film medium, specifically animation. Over the next twenty years, he created nearly a dozen short films by himself and collaborated on three others with his companion, photographer Franklin Backus. In addition, he continued painting fine art watercolors and oils, and he taught at New York University's undergraduate film department, whose animation program he founded in 1979.

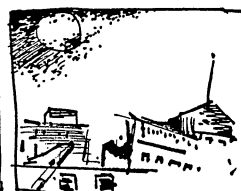
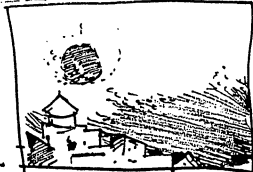
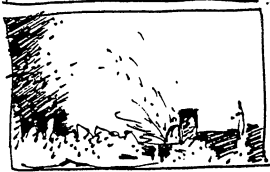
While Richard's signature as an animation filmmaker is idiosyncratic, his use of metamorphosis recalls the work of pioneer animator Emile Cohl. His vibrant, kinetic colors echo the saturated hues of experimental filmmaker Len Lye. Several of Richard's films begin (Robert Breer-like) as abstract dots and lines that casually evolve into full-color watercolors in motion. To make his films, he drew and painted hundreds of small, sequential images that were photographed frame-by-frame with the camera extremely close to the artwork. When projected, the tight camera field gives the lush colors a rich texture. The screen explodes and is restlessly alive with lines and paint; it becomes a canvas in motion.

The close-up view draws the viewer in to participate in the making of the painting. In fact, we feel the sensuality of the act of painting itself: the sweeping caress of a soft brush loaded with liquid color; the crisp ridges of the paper's tooth; the "happy accident" when random pools and eddies of water intermingle and embrace with paint.

His film's narratives are non-linear and non-traditional. They barely exist at all. Like life, they unfold slowly and meander. The filmmaker, one feels, was as surprised as anyone to discover



① Sunset + sun.
moonrise + moon.
over Piers 48 + 51
on the Westside on
a Spring evening.
The moon was full
the sun was red.



where his films eventually went and how they arrived there. The animation is also slow and hesitant, yet always moving forward. The imagery is deeply personal, enigmatic, contemplative and witty, and (again) sensual. It has mystery.

For me and other baby boomer animators, Richard Protovin's films are quintessential representations of the period and place in which they were made: the brief, exciting flowering of independent animation in the 1970s and 80s in New York City. One needn't search too hard to find in the films a reflection of a time of youthful experimentation. It was the Age of Aquarius. Artists and non-artists actively sought to expand the limits of their consciousness in spiritual pursuits, as well as sex, drugs, and rock and roll.

A sybaritic undercurrent flows through Richard's psychedelic, ever-evolving trippy landscapes inhabited by lumpy, cute, and stoned animals. Like a Woodstock-era stalker, the film and filmmaker are a tacit and gentle protest against establishment mainstream filmmaking methods in general and big studio animation productions in particular.

A quote from Richard regarding his still paintings also applies to his animated paintings. "The strokes, the choice of colors, the size," he said, "all have to do with some sort of defense and embrace." Defense/embrace. Push/pull. Attract/repulse. Yes/no. Ying/yang. An uncertainty followed by a move forward; a hesitation followed by a thrust; stop and then go.

Richard personally embodied defense and embrace. He was a short, compact man, with a hirsute, swarthy pudding of a face that held a toothy grin (by turns ironic and self-mocking) and beautiful blue eyes. Those piercing, lively orbs were mirrors of an artistic, restless soul. He was gregarious yet nervous; open yet secretive; brave and fearful.

He was born in the Bronx in 1945 to parents of Armenian and Italian ancestry. When he was nine, the family moved to St. Petersburg, Florida, where Richard completed his MFA at the University of South Florida. He traveled but eventually settled in Manhattan in 1971. He often said he longed "to be in the place where he was not."

His travels informed his work. "My earliest sense of light and spirit," he once wrote, "was during the summers in Quebec as would watch the wind and clouds over Lake Magog reflecting silver bottoms of green leaves. Later, there were the vast skies of Florida and the thunderstorms over the Gulf of Mexico; and even later, the beauty of Manhattan during the dusk in the winter, as well as the black beaches and the fog along the Pacific Coast." All of these memories of places are captured, as you will see, in Richard's films.

New York is where he made his films and where his teaching at NYU inspired a generation of young animators. New York is where he met Franklin Backus, and together they led a lively social and artistic life. Their numerous friends, myself

included, enjoyed many a fine meal, cool drinks, quality grass, and lively conversation at their homes in Manhattan and Fire Island. Only when both became ill from HIV did they exchange the stress and hurry and cold winters of the Apple for a quiet place on a tiny spit of land in warm and sunny Florida.

Most of Richard's films contain a palpable searching quality; a yearning for other (perhaps better) times, tempos, and places. *DICKEY BOAT*, made in 1970 and perhaps his earliest film, is deceptively titled. No aquatic conveyance appears, but there is an airplane, symbol of mobility and escape, slowly mutating while painfully attempting to attain flight. In *TURT BOOGY* from 1972, a kite floats tentatively, then briefly covers a pudgy earthbound turtle who, in the end, spits in frustration at the free-flying kite.

Richard's beloved Florida was always in his fond remembrance while he lived in New York. That exotic peninsula's sand, and sunny colors invades several films. In *FLAMINGO BOOGY* (made in 1974 with an American Film Institute grant) a bright golden-yellow sun fills the screen and sucks oceans dry, then refills them at will. Clouds part to reveal a primitive, magical land and seascape, where birds weep and blue turtles climb atop each other attempting to reach the sun. When one finally does manage to kiss the golden disk, the turtle-climbers tumble in slow motion into a pink sea.

In *STRAW PIB* (made in 1979) we are in Florida again, or under Florida in the ocean swimming to a Latin beat in a tropical day-glo world of huge conch shells, giant octopus, slithering eels, phallic plants, and large schools of brilliantly colored fish. The film is dedicated to the memory of Harry Protovin and White Trout Lake. Harry, the animator's father, loved fishing at that particular lake, which was a then-rural fishing spot north of Tampa.

Other locations also inspired. Like live action director John Ford and newspaper cartoonist George Herriman before him, Monument Valley, Arizona, emblem of the American West, deeply impressed Richard. After a solo drive through the place E.E. Cummings called "a strictly irrational landscape," Richard made *BLUE RIVER* in 1981. He populated it with characters as improbable as Herriman's Krazy Kat and his/her Coconino County cohorts. In Richard's Valley, elements of nature take over an idyllic opening becoming a wild wind storm and volcanic eruption. Perhaps he was channeling the Valley's prehistoric origins; his near-abstract drawings and the intensity of the animation rivals the earth-shaking finale of *FANTASIA*'s Rite of Spring and brought Richard to a new level of graphic expressiveness.

Two visits to Japan inspired and influenced both Richard and Franklin. Richard returned to New York creatively renewed and armed with Japanese painting materials and calligraphic methods, and he also began to sculpt small raku pots. Franklin created elaborate paper constructions and baskets and a new mood of contemplative peace began to appear in his photographs of New York.

FAN FILM (from 1985) is Richard's most colorful and serene film. The nervous tentativeness is replaced by a zen-like meditative acceptance. Fan shapes open, close, change throughout; sometimes they clone themselves suspended in gorgeously colored deep space. Sometimes they become massive, a hovering mask with eye slits; a giant bat; a mother ship invading earth. The shapes open and close, float, hypnotize, seduce, and move on in this extraordinarily beautiful film, Richard's masterpiece.

The trio of collaborative films by Richard and Franklin -- *MANHATTAN QUARTET*, *SOUTHERN IMAGES* and *BATTERY FILM* -- form an elegiac visual poem, a lament for a New York that is no more. Franklin's winter photos have a Hiroshige stillness and monumentality. Some of his Manhattan resembles a lunar landscape. Richard's animation at times becomes the very atoms or particles of life. His restlessly dancing dots and lines lead us into and out of Franklin's solid images. The photos and drawings bear witness to so much that is gone; indeed, to a lost New York. Many

of the settings were literally disappearing when these films were made in the early and mid-1980s. The two artist/filmmakers themselves died within six years of completing the trilogy. Death and loss pervade these works. Perhaps a quiet anger, too. AIDS gained a lethal and rampant foothold during that period, thanks in part to governmental ignorance, confusion and prejudice. The filmmakers' beloved Greenwich Village is seen relentlessly torn down and re-constructed from the Westside piers to the Battery. The films are now archeological documents that remind us that steel and stone are as ephemeral and vulnerable as flesh. Looming throughout the trilogy is the now-ghostly presence of the World Trade Center twin towers. They are now the ultimate reminders of the instability and fragility of life, of the inevitability of change, and the mutability of everything.

Film and video endure, after a fashion, and we are lucky to have in this program a brief clip of Richard on camera promoting the NYU animation program. It is wonderful to see him again, in his prime. But he is equally present in his animated films. His spirit and soul communicates through every frame of his beautiful paintings in motion. Copyright JOHN CANEMAKER 2002. All rights reserved.

THE BRITISH ANIMATION AWARDS 2002 by Tsvika Oren

As any British sheep will gladly tell you, BAA is the sound a sheep utters when it has something to say. Since it is also the abbreviation of the British Animation Awards, it made sheep a symbol of this bi-annual celebration of animation excellence. As a traveling animator I was surprised to see BAA all over Heathrow airport, sans sheep. I was slightly disappointed to discover it also refers to the British Airports Authority. They are too respectable to have flying sheep for a symbol.

A fleeting impression of British animation community, as seen at BAA '02, suggests they show no signs of concern over respectability. Hence the choice of star comedian Linda Smith as MC. Her comments included how nice and cozy it was to be able to have a whole industry in a single room and how those present should acknowledge the fact they are all losers, barring a few freaks about to win prizes.

Prize categories are considered anew every 2 years, thus reflecting the changing state of the art/industry. 2002 had 19 categories. The new categories were: European Features, International Shorts and Music Videos. Jayne Pilling, BAA's director ("creator" might be more accurate), said "Our decision to include a best video category reflects the quality and innovation of animation in the music industry today. Gorillaz, Radiohead and Coldplay are setting new standards in animated music videos." Gorillaz won the award.

In a separate public choice event of the BAA, cinemagoers at 17 screens around the UK voted for their favorite works. There were 3 different programs presenting all types of short films including student work. In the public choice music video screenings the public got to choose from *Clint Eastwood* (Gorillaz, self-styled virtual band), *Don't Panic* (Coldplay), *Pyramid Song* (Radiohead), *Mercury* (Lowgold), *Mambo Number Five* (Bob The Builder) and *Dyin Slowly* (Tindersticks). Coldplay won that prize.

In the new International Short category Jerzy Kucia from Poland won the award for *Tuning Instruments*. It is a 16 minute film and the program notes say, "for taking the viewer on an intriguing journey, via a compelling interplay of sound and image which produce a powerful emotional effect." The category seems like a natural development for BAA, at least to those who are aware of the events involvement with the international animation scene. For example in Israel (Tsvika Oren lives in Tel Aviv) animation lovers have had the opportunity of seeing selections from BAA '96, '98 and 2000 with Jayne Pilling as the host. The international screenings were supported by The British Council.

The new European Feature category reflects the impressive growth of feature production. The prize in this category

was shared by two wonderful films, Aardman's "*Chicken Run*" and Michel Ocelot's *Kirikou and the Sorceress*.

Michael Dudok de Wit's *Father and Daughter* won the Craft Award, Best Scenario and Best Short. The Best Animation at the Cutting Edge prize went to Brothers Quay for *In Absentia* (made for the BBC). Barry Purves won the Best TV Special for *Hamilton Matress*.

Another excellent film is Suzie Templeton's *Dog*. It won the Paul Berry award for best student film. She is a graduate of the Royal College of Art and her 5 minute puppet film focuses on 3 lost males, a dog, a child and a father. It is a very moving, poetic, episodic story. Her perfect character animation, timing, lighting, editing and sound convey the essence of loneliness and a persons hunger for love. It shows how deep a film can penetrate the spectator to become an emotional, personal experience. Trying to do verbal justice to *Dog* is rather frustrating, which explains the lack of descriptions here of many other fine BAA winners.

Being a foreign guest at the BAA was somewhat like joining a family affair. It was a privilege having an inside peak at a wonderfully creative family celebrating its excellence. Since family members know each other's work, only excerpts were shown at the event. For an outsider, these evoke quite an appetite to see all. Alas, feeding was limited to a special screening of some of the winning films. Beware: You may consider getting a divorce in order to marry into their family. (note: Unfortunately Oren was not in the UK in February when the public got a chance to see the Public Choice Awards' screenings.)

Jayne Pilling creates this awe inspiring event from scratch every 2 years and it is a very complex, well organized event. There was also a second part to the BAA, a very stimulating 2 day "Art and Animation" symposium. Internationally renowned artists shared their insights, supplying food for thought. Discussion topics included personal attitudes towards drawing as a form of self-expression in a film, animated film as art and the creative process. One creative process program included Wendy Tilby and Amanda Forbis showing preliminary sketches and talking about the development of *When the Day Breaks*.

The awards, the 'Oscars' of the British animation industry, took place at the National Film Theatre on 15 March, 2002. A complete list of winners can be found at BAA's web site: britishanimationawards.com

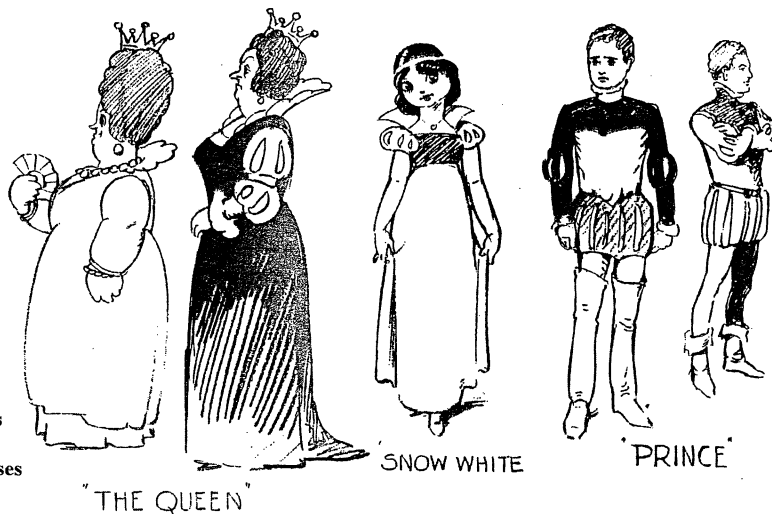
For further details about the competition see Jason Robertson's article on the BAA at *Animation Magazine Daily*, beginning March 6, animationmagazine.net

OBITUARIES

DISNEY STORYMAN BILL PEET HAS DIED He was 87. He began at the studio as an apprentice animator on SNOW WHITE when he was 22 in 1937. He moved into the story department where he worked on PINOCCHIO, FANTASIA, THE THREE CABALLEROS, SONG OF THE SOUTH, CINDERELLA, PETER PAN, ALICE IN WONDERLAND, SLEEPING BEAUTY and THE JUNGLE BOOK. Animation historian John Canemaker says, "Bill Peet was Walt Disney's greatest storyman and considered to be on a par with Walt himself in terms of telling strong stories with vibrant characters. Walt trusted Bill's storytelling powers so much that he assigned him to write the studio's first original script for an animated feature. Bill completely storyboarded DALMATIANS by himself and it is considered to be one of the tightest, most fun and interesting narratives the studio ever did."

Peet left Disney in 1964 to pursue a full-time career as a children's book author. He was the author of 35 published books. Peet is survived by his wife of 64 years, a son, and three grandchildren.

SAN FRANCISCO STATE'S ANIMATION PROGRAM AND ASIFA-SF PRESENT



An early sheet of suggested models for three of the principal characters in *Snow White* (1937) by Albert Hurter. Copyright Disney Enterprises

MIKE BARRIER, IN-PERSON

AUTHOR OF "HOLLYWOOD CARTOONS: AMERICAN ANIMATION IN ITS GOLDEN AGE"

A TALK, SCREENING OF RARE FILMS AND BOOK SIGNING



Monday, June 17 at 7:30 PM

San Francisco State University, August Coppola Theater (Fine Arts Building, Room 101)

Mike Barrier will discuss some of the material in his book and will illustrate his presentation with a screening of some of the films that played an important role in the history of the Hollywood cartoon. His selection will feature extremely rare works, shown on 16mm film and videotape. The tentative program includes:

- A Frank Moser-animated Aesop's Fable from early 1928, with a mouse hero and heroine who anticipate Mickey and Minnie's debut a few months later.
- An early Scrappy with an excellent example of Dick Huemer's eccentric animation.
- An early sound Oswald with Bill Nolan's animation.
- An early Terrytoon with Bill Tytla's animation of a giant who is like a rough sketch for the giant in *Brave Little Tailor*.
- Rudy Ising's MGM cartoon *Home on the Range*, followed by the pose reel for that cartoon drawn by Bob Allen.
- An example of forbidden animation.

WHAT REVIEWERS SAY ABOUT "HOLLYWOOD CARTOONS"



Publishers Weekly - "both a delightful entertainment and a serious study, easily ranking as the definitive overview of the animation industry's accomplishments."

New York Times Book Review - "those who take the art of animation seriously will find this tough-minded book challenging and revelatory."

Washington Post - "a major contribution to our understanding of the work of not only the Disney animators, but also of men like Max and Dave Fleischer, Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera, John Hubley, and the brilliant Warner Bros. crew."

The Economist (London) - "His book is rich in nuggets that bring the era ... vividly to life."

Boston Book Review - "a magical gift."

Copley News Service - "the first full-length, comprehensive history of a uniquely American art form, and one that is likely to become an instant classic."

IT IS WITH SADDNESS IN OUR HEARTS THAT WE REPORT THE PASSING OF A GREAT ICON OF THE ANIMATION INDUSTRY The Pillsbury Doughboy died yesterday of a yeast infection and complications from repeated pokes in the belly. He was 81. Doughboy was buried in a lightly greased coffin. Dozens of celebrities turned out to pay their respects, including Mrs. Butterworth, Hungry Jack, the California Raisins, Betty Crocker, the Hostess Twinkies and Captain Crunch. The grave site was piled high with flours. Aunt Jemima delivered the eulogy and lovingly described Doughboy as a man who never knew how much he was kneaded. The funeral was held at 3:50 for about 20 minutes.

Doughboy rose quickly in show business, but his late life was filled with turnovers. He was not considered a very smart cookie, wasting much of his dough on half-baked schemes. Despite being a little flaky at times, he still, as a crusty old man, was considered a roll model for millions. Doughboy is survived by his wife, Play Dough; by his elderly father, Pop Tart and by two children, John and Jane Dough.

Thanks GM for the laughs. Apparently this has been a widely read story on the Internet, but it was new to me..

FESTIVALS

An Invitation to ASIFA Members from The Ottawa International Animation Festival OIAF is offering ASIFA members a \$10 discount on pass prices at this year's festival: October 2 to 6 at the National Arts Centre.

OIAF 2002 features special programs on R.O. Blechman and The Ink Tank (New York), Buzzco Animation (New York), The Gerald McBoing Boing Show, The Unsung Heroes of Animation: Janie Geiser (U.S.A.), Jonathan Amitay (Canada) & Stephen Woloshen (Canada), a 2 part series on Korean Animation, John Kricfalusi (U.S.A.), Piotr Dumala (Poland), Taku Furukawa (Japan), Harry Smith (U.S.A.) and David Ehrlich (U.S.A.). Don't miss our competitions and panorama screenings to see what is on the cutting edge of animation now.

ASIFA-SAN FRANCISCO

P.O. Box 14516

San Francisco, CA 94114

Plus there are workshops on topics such as software tips and tricks, storyboarding, writing for animation, meet the masters, pitching, portfolio reviews and more. Don't miss the Cartoon Network Animator's Picnic, the parties and the Chez Ani.

Go to awn.com/ottawa/ottawa02/02order.php3 to order passes. ASIFA members are \$185 (Can) (includes festival reader, picnic and parties)

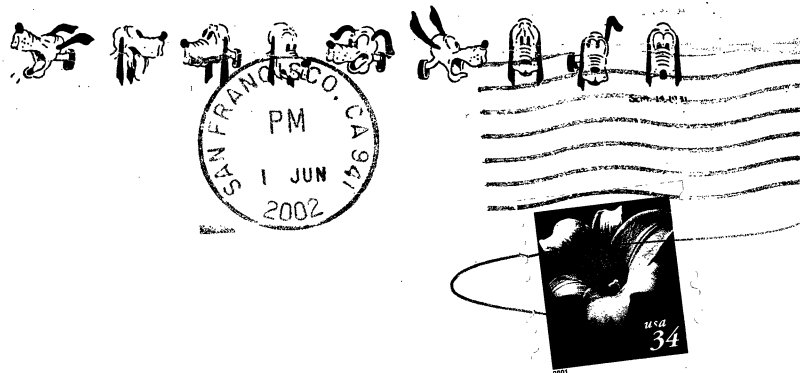
The July 1st entry deadline is coming up. There is no entry fee. Don't forget their new internet, non-narrative and feature film categories. For more information on the festival, please call us at (613) 232-8769 or email them at info@animationfestival.ca

2002 DIRECTV - LEVEL13.NET 2nd ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL - ENTRY DEADLINE IS JULY 15. The online festival takes place on the web December 2 - 31. An event that showcases the best independently produced animation from around the country. Submissions are accepted in 2D Animation, 3D/Experimental Animation and Student Work categories. Winning films

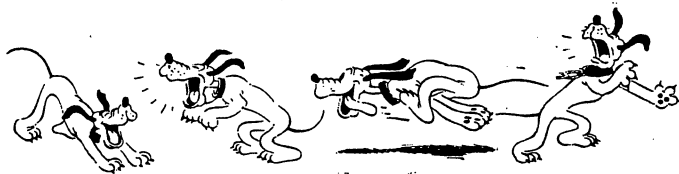
will be awarded cash prizes and will be featured in a one-hour broadcast on DIRECTV throughout November. There is no entry fee. For more information level13.net

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DOCUMENTARY AND SHORT FILMS, BILBAO, SPAIN This the 44th annual running of this well run event. No entry fee, 2 big cash prizes in animation (3 and 2 grand), previews on film or PAL tape. Colon de Larreategui, 37, 4th - 48009 Bilbao, Spain info@zinebi.com

LOOK FOR "THE INDEPENDENT SPIRIT: THE JOHN AND FAITH HUBLEY STORY" ON PBS IN JUNE



6/30/2002 Local
John Peterson
12 Bishop Lane
Menlo Park, CA 94025



This issue was written by Karl Cohen. Mailing crew included Shirley Smith and Ron Seawright.

